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THE  
**Divine Institution**  
OF  
Congregational Churches,  
*Ministry and Ordinances,*  
[As has bin Professed by those of that *Persuasion*]  
Asserted and Proved from the  
**WORD of GOD.**


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*Hebrews* 8. 5, 6. *Moses* was admonished of God saying, see that thou make all things according to the Pattern shewed thee in the Mount: But he [*i. e. Christ*] hath obtained a more excellent Ministry, &c.

*Hebrews* 3. 5, 6. *Moses* verily was faithful in all his [*i. e. God's*] House as a Servant, &c. but *Christ* as a Son over his own House, whose House are we.

*Ezek.* 43. 11. If they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the House, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof [*i. e. of the Ordinances*] and all the Laws thereof, and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and do them.

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By *Isaac Chauncy*, M. A. 

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# T O T H E READER.

**A**LL True Religion wherein Man can have any access unto God, with acceptation, must be revealed to him by God; For tho Humane Reason, and the remaining innate Light in Fallen Man, may shew him that there is a God, and but one God (as it hath done to some of the Heathen Philosophers) And that this God is to be served and worshipped by the Intelligent Creatures which he hath made, from his Right over them by Creation and Providence; and also from the Impression of some Moral Principles yet abiding, Rom. 1. 20. & 2. 14, 15. And so far Natural Religion hath gone of it self, by the conduct of the natural light of Reason and Conscience only; Yet never any farther, and rarely so far; such is the lost and deplorable state of Fallen Man. But for any Man to pretend to know what God is in his Essence and Subsistence; and how this God will be worshipped without Divine Revelation, or beyond, or otherwise than he hath revealed is the highest and most irrational Presumption in the World that vain Man who would be wise, can be Guilty of: For if Adam in Eden before the Fall, notwithstanding all the perfection of his Creation, must have a divine Revelation over and above, to direct his right behaviour there, in his duty of obedience unto God: How much more is such Revelation

needful to him and his Apostate Race since the Fall? Let them that deny the necessity of Revelation to the knowledge of what God is, and how he should be worshipped aright for his Glory, and Man's Eternal Welfare, if they own the Scriptures to be the Word of God (which many such do not, therefore not to be Disputed with as Christians, but as Heathens and Infidels) but read the Scriptures seriously, and for the present a few places here noted (only consider them well) Job 11. 6, 7, 8, 9, 12. Isa. 55. 8, 9. Dent. 29. 29. Rom. 1. 21. 22, 23. ch. 11. 33, 34. 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, 12, 14, 16. & ch. 3. 18. 19, 20.

Tho most that profess themselves Christians dare not explicitly deny the truth of what is above asserted; yet many of them do practically and interpretatively deny it, by measuring the deep things of God, and the Mind of the Spirit, not by it self, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, but by their own carnal, shallow and fallacious reasonings and imaginations, as also by taking up such ways of Worship which he never ordained; built wholly, or for the most part, upon Humane Authority, Laws, Tradition, Interest, &c. but not on Christ. Such hath bin the abomination (since the working of the Mystery of iniquity) which hath made all true Religion desolate in the greatest part of the World professing it, or pretending thereto.

Wherefore as to matter and manner of Divine Worship, the great thing controverted in the World among the many Ways professed and practised is, Who can lay the best Claim to Divine Authority. And hence it is that We (pretending also to the like claim) do here, not only declare what we hold

hold in this weighty Point, but make our Plea for the best Right to Divine Authority for the worship of God in Congregational Churches: Which being the Sum and Design of the ensuing Treatise, 'tis needless here to insist on.

And if this appear to be a just Plea, it might be enough to lay a sufficient Obligation upon the Minds and Consciences of all such as fear God, out of true Love and Loyalty to Jesus Christ to fall in immediately to a chearful compliance therewith, in observation of all things which he hath commanded, looking upon such a ponderous weight in the ballance of the Sanctuary, abundantly enough to weigh down all other opposite Arguments of a lower alloy, arising from Prejudice, carnal Reason, or the Spirit of the World.

But because such carnal Reasonings, ly as stumbling-blocks before many, keeping them from a ready embracing the ways of God, it may not be amiss to speak something briefly to some of the greatest Objections which are made against the Divine Institutions here laid before the Reader in the following Discourse.

1. Some are ready to accuse the Congregational Practice and Principles, As not comporting with Civil States and Government, and so would render them odious to Princes.

Ans<sup>r</sup>. These are either deeply prejudiced against all the Ways of God, or speak evil of such things which they know not: For, it's sufficiently known to be the avowed Principle and Practice of such as are of the Congregational Persuasion, That there's no Power but of God, and ordained by him, and that they ought to be subject to Magistracy for Conscience sake, to pay Tribute,

bute, and give unto Cesar the things that are Cefars. Their Lord and Master set himself for their Example in this, and hath left it, with his Precept upon Record, which they dare not but obey.

2. Their Principles are diametrically opposite to the assuming or claiming a Power over, or share in the Government of the Civil State, by virtue of any Ecclesiastical Relation, Ministerial or other. What they lay claim to of Civil Rights and Privileges is no more than what is equally due to them with other Subjects.

3. As they are bound to believe by the Word of God, That they ought not to subject their Consciences to Humane Will or Laws in spiritual things; so they believe it belongs not to them to subordinate and subject Magistratick Power and Laws to Church Censures, or require them to be Executioners thereof; Christ's Government in his Churches being compleat enough within its self to answer all the spiritual ends and purposes thereof, for which it was Ordained, without the instrumentality of any foreign coercive power whatsoever.

4. When Christ first instituted Churches, and for many Years after, they were to be under Heathen Emperors; which shewed (1.) That he did not Ordain such a Constitution as was destructive to any Civil Government, even the worst. (2.) That the Oeconomy erected by Christ and his Apostles was sufficient to answer all Intents and Purposes of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction without dependance upon the States and Princes of the World for the execution thereof, and was fully practical under any Civil Powers, who would but permit the Profession of Christianity according to Mens Consciences.

2. If any Alledge, That the Congregational Practice

Practice abridgeth the People of their Liberty.

*We answer* 1. If by liberty be meant liberty to sin, this all Religions must profess to restrain; that which doth not, is not to be called Religion; and this is no more than all Christian Magistrates ought to do. Besides, a liberty to Sin is the most Diabolical Slavery in the World. 2. Our Way deprives Men of no lawful Civil Liberties. 3. It doth no more deprive Men of Spiritual Liberties, than a Civil Corporation-Government deprives Men of Civil Liberties. For 1. Both the one and the other have the most desirable Immunities and Privileges granted by Charter in their respective kinds. 2. There are no Members made by a coercive power, all voluntarily offer themselves. 3. There are no Members admitted or cast out by an Arbitrary and Despotick Power, but all is done by the consent of the Body Politick. 4. A Church is made a Prison to none, but any one may depart to another orderly and regularly, when called thereto. 5. As all Members are admitted, so all Ministerial Officers are chosen by Consent and Agreement of the Body; none are imposed. 6. As all Tryals of offending Persons in a Civil Corporation are by the Neighbourhood as to matter of fact, so in a Spiritual Corporation all such Judicial Proceedings are in a way of Tryal first in the Church by the Brotherhood, upon whose Judgment of Guilty or not Guilty, the Elder passeth Sentence of Condemnation or Absolution.

3. If any object Strictness of the Terms of Admission. *It is Answered* 1. All Vertuous Persons like those Societies best that stand upon the strictest Terms of Admission, for they are likely to be purest. 2. Have not all Families, Companies, Cor-



porations their Terms of Admission which they will stand upon? Is it not fit you should be qualified as the Society expects, and submit to the Laws of the Society by express Agreement? Is it fit you should enjoy the Immunities of a Family, or other Society, without a due qualification and obligation? Without the first you are unmeet, without the latter ungovernable. 3. The Terms are reasonable, and as easie as possible for a Spiritual Society, a household of Faith; as is made appear in the following Treatise. And whatever slight Terms of Admittance you are for, whilst a non-Member; if you have the true Grace of God in your heart, when you become a Member, you will not be willing others should be so admitted, lest it should make such a foul House as your self will not be able long to endure.

4. Some one will say or think, I am loth to come under the Observation, Obligation and Charge of Church-Membership: I hope I shall go to Heaven without it, tho I would willingly have my Child baptized.

Ans. 1. Take this altogether, and it's a great question whether such an one hath Grace in his heart, or hath any good grounds of Hope that he shall go to Heaven: For it argues looseness of heart and life and Covetousness which is Idolatry; yea, and plain Hypocrisie, that he would have his Child baptized, meerly for form and Reputation sake. For I would say to such an one, 1. Is not one Seal of the Covenant of as much weight to a Believer as another? Wilt thou baptize thy Child as thy duty, and neglect the other Seal for thy Worldly Advantage, and so indulge thy self in Sin? By what right dost thou claim Baptism for thy Child? Is it by vertue of Abraham's Covenant? And dost thou openly profess

*sees it, and wilt not stipulate to the said Covenant? How art thou such a Child of Abraham as the Blessing is come upon? surely not the Blessing of Church-Membership. Obj. But I hope my Infant hath right to Baptism, tho I am no Church-Member. Ans. He that himself is such, as that if he were un-baptized, he hath no right to Baptism, cannot plead right for his Child: But no non-Member can plead right to any Seal, the Seals of the Covenant being given to the Church, and not to the World; nor one Seal to the World, and the other to the Church. Obj. But I am a Member of the Catholick Church by my Personal Covenanting with God. Ans. 1. Who knows what thy private and secret actions be; to verifie the Truth of what thou saist, the Church calls thee to Covenant with God and them: If thou wilt partake of the Privileges of the Church, and if thou hast bin serious in Covenanting privately, thou wilt be as willing to Covenant openly with God and his Church; for he that Covenants socially, Covenants but personally, and he that Covenants with Christ, Covenants with him socially, tho secretly, for he takes him as Head of the Mystical Body. So that the Notion of Personal and Social Covenanting makes not a legal distinction, having no sufficient dissimilarity of parts, they differing but ratiōe only, and so are but diversa; not ratiōe & re, so as to be vera opposita. 2. Such personal Covenanting as you intend, (if it be real) makes you but a Member of the Mystical Body of Christ, not of any visible Church, which alone is the subject of the Seals and other Ordinances. 3. The Profelytes publicly embraced Abraham's Covenant, and joined to the Church thereby, under the Old Testament, before they*



were circumcised, and under the New Testament before they were baptized. For the first see Deut. 29. 11, 12. where the Stranger covenanted publicly with the Lord and socially with that Church in the Land of Moab just before they passed over Jordan, and were circumcised by Joshua, ch. 5. 2, 3, 4. For the latter see Acts 2. 39, 41. Peter makes them that manifested their Repentance, to stipulate publicly to Abraham's Covenant before they were baptized; And as many as declared their glad receiving and embracing the Promise for themselves and Seed were baptized; for they who did not explicitly declare so much were not baptized, as appears by the Text.

In a Word, Dost thou profess to be a Christian? to have received Christ by Faith for righteousness, and life, and to live Godly in Christ Jesus? It is thy Duty then to join thy self in Church-Fellowship, and thou sinnest greatly against God if thou dost not: For 1. Church-Membership is one of the great parts of Abraham's Blessing, And wilt thou exclude thy self from any part of so great a Gift? 2. Church-Membership is a Spiritual Blessing that a Believer is blessed withal in Christ Jesus, And shall not that be vained by thee? 3. A Believer in Christ hath right to Church Blessings, And wilt thou loose thy Possession for want of Claim? 4. If thou art a true Believer, Christ is precious to thee in all his Offices, in all his Relations; as Head of the Body, Apostle and High-Priest of thy Profession; Wilt thou not be of that Body Politick to whom he is the Head? of that House over which he is Lord, that thou mayst offer spiritual Sacrifices? 5. He hath called thee out of the World, and thou art bound to come out and be separate, and Covenant with God. *6. However thou professest to be with Christ; in this*

this thou art against him, and scatterest abroad.

7. Hast thou tasted that the Lord is gracious, and so art become a living Stone? then thou art to come to Christ the chief Corner-Stone in Church-Fellowship, to be built up a spiritual House, and united therein by Joints and Bands, to be a fellow-Citizen of the Saints, and to help to fill up a holy Political Temple for a Habitation of God by the Spirit.

8. Thou wilt never grow kindly in Grace out of a Church; for that is God's Garden, his Vineyard which he Plants, Prunes, Waters with Blessings continually on all the means of Grace there. 9. What Fellowship canst thou have in the World? What communion hath Christ with Belial, Light with Darkness, &c.? 10. Thou lyeest open to multitude of Temptations; and no wonder if God suffers them to prevail. 11. Thou thinkest thou gainest as to the World by not engaging in Church-Fellowship, and saiest it is not time to build God's House, but dost thou not carry out much and bring in little, and put what thou gettest into a Bag with Holes? 12. To join to a Church of Christ is the highest way of glorifying God visibly in the World. 13. Thou canst never have that Communion with God out of Church-Fellowship as in. 14. Whilst thou professest Christ and continuest a non-Member, thou art a scandal to thy Profession, and a means to harden the wicked.

Now lastly, It may be expected that we give some Reasons of Publishing this small Treatise. The Reasons are briefly these: 1. For the Honour and Interest of the Lord Jesus Christ; which is the main End designed, and all the following reasons are in subordination thereto. 2. Because it's time to build, and God in his Providence plainly speaks it, in that he blows upon our outward things, and blasts them daily,

daily, because we let the House of Godly waste. 3. To vindicate our selves against our false Accusers, who render us such as have little regard to the observation of whatever Christ commands. 4. Because most of the Writings of the faithful Builders are out of Print, or not easily obtained. 5. Because many good People that have a love to Christ, and desire to walk in obedience to all God's Commandments, want due instruction in these Points. Hence it was earnestly desired that we would Publish such a short Treatise, and we dare not withhold the Truth in unrighteousness. 6. Because of the great degeneration and declination of the life of Christianity, and stedfast and close walking of Churches in all the parts of Gospel Order, that they may repent and do their first works. 7. Not to impose on the Consciences of any, but to hold forth unto them what light we have received from the Word of God, for the illumination of the ignorant, the strengthening the weak, removing stumbling-blocks from such as are offended at us, and encouragement of all such as are willing and ready to build. He that hath Ears to hear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: In which, Glory be to God by Jesus Christ throughout all Ages, World without End, A M E N.

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Errata: Page 2. line 7. r. Congregation was. p. 11. l. 22. r. social; p. 13. l. 21. dele punctum, & for The r. the; p. 18. l. 6. a fi. for is, r. are; p. 20. l. 2. r. Catholicity; p. 38. l. 15. for any one, r. he; p. 41. l. 5. r. themselves; p. 46. l. 17. r. discerned; p. 73. Margin. r. d Num. 8. 10, 11.

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THE  
Divine Institution  
OF  
*Congregational Churches.*

CHAP. I.

*Of a Church in General.*

*Of the meaning of the Word Church : A Meeting-Place no Church : It's a spiritual Building, but it's God's, not Man's Building, such are not God's Churches, many of which there are : Notes to discern true or false by : Christ the Head of a true Church : A Church the Body of Christ : How Christ's Body is understood : What a True Church is not made of : And what it is not : And what it is : What the remote and next genus of a Church.*

Sect. I. **T**HE Word Church or Kirk, is most likely to be descended of the Greek words *κυρια οίκος* contracted *κυριοίη*, signifying the House of God, <sup>a</sup>. And hence the best Notation of it, is by this Interpretation, That a Church is *domus dominica*, or

B                      God's

(a) 1-Tim.  
3. 15.

*b* Jud. 18.  
 31--20.26  
 2 *Chro.* 3.3  
 & 4. 19.  
 & 24. 5.  
*c* *Act* 7.38  
*d* *Hebr.* 9.  
 11.  
*e* *Eph.* 2.19  
*f* 1 *Pet.* 2.  
 5.

God's House, wherein he dwells by a more than usual Presence in the World. Of old God chose a Material House to appear and manifest himself in to his Church of *Israel* <sup>b</sup>, but as those Buildings were not the Church, but the Congregations were <sup>c</sup>: So in the New Testament days more especially, God's Church is not a House or Building artificially made by Man, but another Building, <sup>d</sup> *i. e.* a spiritual Household <sup>e</sup>, or Building <sup>f</sup>.

§. 2. Tho some think a Place of meeting ordinarily for the Worship of God in Publick, may, by a Metonymy, be called a Church in an improper sense; and ignorant People from such Usage take such a Place to be so, yet it doth appear plainly, That there is no just grounds from Scripture to apply such a *Trope* to an House for a Publick Assembly.

1. Nothing is more evident by Scripture, than that an Artificial Building is not a Church; for the Apostle *Paul* wrote his Epistles to Churches, which could not be Dead-Walls, but to a People <sup>a</sup>.
2. God purchas'd his Church with his Blood <sup>b</sup>, which is a People, not Artificial Houses.
3. We are commanded to give no offence to the Church of God <sup>c</sup>, which cannot be meant of a Meeting-House, not capable of offence.
4. *Paul* persecuted

*a* 1 *Cor.* 1.  
 2. & 2 *Ep.*  
 1. 1.  
*b* *Act* 20.  
 28.  
*c* 1 *Cor.*  
 10. 32.

secuted the Church of God <sup>d</sup>, which could not be the Meeting-Place, neither had the Church then any certain Meeting-Place. §. There is no House or artificial Building in Scripture called a Church.

§. 3. By way of Similitude, and Metaphorically, a Church is called an House, a Temple, or Building, or City, it being such in a spiritual sense <sup>a</sup>, built of spiritual Materials, join'd and fram'd together in due connection and order <sup>b</sup>, bearing Analogie to the Temple of old, a Type of the Gospel-Church <sup>c</sup>, and is called Gods House <sup>d</sup>, because it is his Propriety <sup>e</sup>, it's of his framing and building <sup>f</sup>, it's his chosen, purchased and peculiar inheritance in the World <sup>g</sup>: God dwells and appears therein in a special and gracious manner <sup>h</sup>; it is called by his Name <sup>i</sup>, it is called the Church of the living God <sup>k</sup>; God is therein glorified <sup>l</sup>.

§. 4. Churches therefore are not of humane fabrick or fashion; nor to suit the carnal Minds and Interests of Men or States; Mens Laws cannot establish Churches; they must be built after the Pattern which God hath shewed <sup>a</sup>; it's not Gods Church which Man builds, and is after his inventions <sup>b</sup>: God never gave Commission to the Pope, Ecclesiastick or Civil Powers to institute Churches <sup>c</sup>;

*d* 1 Cor. 15. 9.  
*Gal.* 1. 13.

*a* 1 Pet. 2. 5  
*Heb.* 3. 5, 6  
*b* Eph. 2. 21  
*c* *ib.* v. 22.  
*d* Heb. 10. 21.  
*e* Deut. 32. 19.

*f* 1 Cor. 3. 9. Heb. 3. 4. 6  
*g* Deut. 14. 2.

*Psa.* 132. 13  
*Tit.* 2. 14.

*Psa.* 135. 4.  
*1* Pet. 2. 9.

*b* 2 Cor. 6. 16. Eph. 2. 22. *Psal.*

87. 2.  
*i* 2 Chro. 7. 14.

*k* 1 Tim. 3. 15.

*l* Eph. 2. 20. 21.

*a* Exo. 26. 30.

*Heb.* 8. 5.

*b* *Psa.* 106. 29. 39.

*Matt.* 15. 8.  
*c* *Isa.* 1. 12. 13. 14.

*Isa.* 42. 8.  
*Isa.* 48. 11.



*d Eze. 43.*  
*10. 11.*

*e Eze. 43.*

*8.*

*b Psa. 106.*

*29.*

*c Hab. 1.*

*16.*

*d Isa. 1. 12,*

*43.*

*e Hos. 5.*

*1. 3.*

*f 1 King*

*12. 27.*

*g Hos. 5. 3.*

*h Hos. 2. 2.*

*i 2 Kings*

*17. 21. 22.*

*k 2 Thes. 4.*

*7.*

*l Rev. 17.*

*5. 18.*

and as a Church is of God, so the whole form and fashion is of Gods teaching only, <sup>d</sup>.

§. 5. Hence it is that the Spirit of God in his Word hath witnessed against, and renounced nothing more than false Churches; such especially (with all their appurtenances of Ordinances, Officers and Worship) which have apostatized from, and forsaken his own Pattern and Institution <sup>a</sup>, and fashioned themselves by their Humane Inventions <sup>b</sup>, to answer their own carnal Interests <sup>c</sup> and corrupt Ends <sup>d</sup> Ecclesiastical <sup>e</sup> or Civil <sup>f</sup>, wherefore such always are charged with spiritual Whoredoms <sup>g</sup>, and treated as Harlots <sup>h</sup>, most especially the Catholick Visible, that Mother of Harlots, with all her spurious brood of Subordinations, Hierarchical and Representative; two especially are laid before us as the most notorious Harlots: That of *Jeroboam's* <sup>i</sup>, and that of the Antichristian Apostacy <sup>k</sup>; by the latter the World is corrupted to this day, she sitting under the Name of the Catholick visible Church with her Offspring, ruling over the Kingdoms of the Western World as the Mother of Harlots <sup>l</sup>, not only breeding, but nursing up all Idolatry, Superstition, Will-Worship, and all departure from the Pattern of Christ, which



which hath bin and is by *Papists* and un-illuminated or interested *Protestants*<sup>m</sup>, Fathering all her spiritual Cheats (whereby both sorts are intoxicated) on the Name of Christ, whence the Seven Women<sup>n</sup> (Churches in the Prophetick Language) are said to lay hold on one Man, *i. e.* the Lord Jesus Christ, desiring to be called by his Name, to take away the reproach of spurious and adulterine Churches, but yet feed on their own Institutions, and are cloathed with their own righteousness.

§. 6. Pretended Churches of Christ may be discerned to be true or false. 1. By the foundation, whether on the Person, Nature, Offices, and Word of Christ<sup>a</sup>. 2. By the visible matter, whether living Stones<sup>b</sup>. 3. By the Form, Fashion and Frame, according to the order of the Gospel<sup>c</sup>. Hence a Church is no Church of God, either of these being altogether wanting; or is but a faulty and deficient Church, so far as its defective in these, as to Faith or Order: Wherefore the more the Mystery of iniquity comes to be discovered, and the true Woman, the Lambs Wife, comes out of her Wilderness-State, we may expect that the Churches will come to an higher degree of Purity and Order<sup>d</sup>.

§. 7. Wherefore to a true Church Christ.

*m Rev. 18*

2. 3.

*n Esa. 4. 1.*

*a 1 Pet. 2. 4*

*Ephe. 2. 20*

*b 1 Pet. 2. 4*

*c Heb. 8.*

5. 6. & 3.

3. *Mat. 28.*

20. *Ezek.*

43. 11.

*Col. 2. 5.*

*d Isa. 1. 25*

*Rev. 19.*

7, 8.

*a Eph. 1. 22**b Col. 1.  
18, 19.**c Heb. 1. 6.  
Psa. 89. 27**d 1 Cor. 12  
12. Eph. 1.  
21, 22.**a Col. 1. 18**b Eph. 5. 23**c John 15.  
1.**Rom. 11. 24**d 1 Pet. 2.**4. 5.**e Isa. 42. 6.**Heb. 10. 9,**10.**f John 1.**14. 16.**Col. 2. 3.**g Psa. 118.**22.**b Eph. 5.**15.**i Eph. 3. 25*

Christ is all and in all <sup>a</sup>, he being the Head in all respects, and hath the Preheminence <sup>b</sup>, being before all things, and above all things, the Head of Principalities, in Dignity and Dominion, worshipped by Angels <sup>c</sup>, higher than the Kings of the Earth. It hath pleased the Father, that there should be a special relation, and mutual Fulness between Christ and the Church, Christ being so the Head of his Church as he is to none else, and as Christ filleth the Church, so the Church is the fulness of Christ <sup>d</sup>.

§ 8. This Headship of Christ is divers ways illustrated to us in Scripture by a Natural Man's Head and Body <sup>a</sup>, by a Family or Conjugal Head <sup>b</sup>, by a Root or Vegetable Head <sup>c</sup>, by an Head of an artificial Building, the Head Corner-Stone <sup>d</sup>, and hence it appears, That Christ is such a Head as represents the whole Body, and transacts all things for it <sup>e</sup>, That Christ is the vital Head of his Church, the Spring and Fountain from whence all Life and Motion flows <sup>f</sup>. He is the Head Corner-Stone, the strength and support of all the Building <sup>g</sup>. He is the Conjugal Head and Saviour of the Body <sup>h</sup>, of whom all the Family is named <sup>i</sup>. And lastly, Christ is set forth by these similitudes, and otherwise, unto

to us as a graciously ruling and governing Head unto his Church, set on this holy Hill<sup>k</sup>, the Throne of David<sup>l</sup>, he is the Political Head, the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession,<sup>m</sup>.

*k* Psalm 2.  
*l* Luke 1.32

*m* Heb. 3.1

§. 9. As Christ stands in relation to the Church as the Head, so the Church is related to Christ as the Body<sup>a</sup>, being in that respect, his fulness, Christ and his Church making one Mystically<sup>b</sup>. The Body of Christ in Scripture is variously taken.

*a* Col. 1.  
18. 24.  
*Eph.* 1.23.

*b* 1 Cor.  
12. 12.

1. It is taken for the substance of the Mystery of Christ, typified and shadowed forth by the Ceremonial Law<sup>c</sup>. 2. It is taken for the Humane Nature of Christ, wherein he lived and suffered here<sup>d</sup>. 3. It's used for the Sacramental or Symbolick Body of Christ<sup>e</sup>. 4. It's taken for a Church or People embodied or incorporated in Christ Jesus, and is his Political Body<sup>f</sup>. 5. It's used in a proper sense for the very Body of Christ, separate and distinct from his Soul<sup>g</sup>. It is the fourth Acceptation that we are here concerned in.

*c* Col. 2.17

*d* Rom. 7.4  
*Heb.* 10.5-  
10.

*e* Luke 22.  
19.

*f* Eph. 5.23  
*Col.* 1. 18.

*g* Mat. 27-  
58.

§. 10. A Church of God (as to the most general consideration) is the Body of Christ in a Spiritual and Political acceptance of a Body<sup>a</sup>. in which respect, it's compared to a Family, and City, and Candlestick.

*a* Col. 1.24

1. It is a Company congregated, not

one or two, in the Body are many Members <sup>b</sup>. 2. It's a Company of Men, not of Angels, for Angels are no where called a Church tho a Company <sup>c</sup>, but they surround the Church <sup>d</sup>, and consort in their Adorations with the Church. The Angels were not Redeemed by Christ's Blood, neither of the Nature of the Head, and therefore not the Body of Christ, as the Church is <sup>e</sup>. 3. It's a spiritual Company, in contra-distinction to humane and civil Societies or Companies gathered together occasionally or statedly <sup>f</sup>. 4. It's separated from the World, all the World is not a Church; but it's called and separated out of the World <sup>g</sup>; as Christ the Head is separate <sup>h</sup>, so must the Body be. 5. They are not a company of scattered Sheep, but gathered into a Fold <sup>i</sup>. Stones not lying here and there, but brought into a building <sup>k</sup>. 6. They are embodied or incorporated with the Corner-Stone, and to one another, and as Members are knit to the Head and one another <sup>l</sup>. Hence Union to Christ the Head, and to one another, is essentially necessary to the Church of God <sup>m</sup>, to which Union is requisite cutting off from the old Stock and Implantation into the new <sup>n</sup>; connection, knitting and coalition of Head and Members together

*b* 1 Cor. 12.  
 12.  
*Rev.* 1. 20.  
*c* Heb. 12.  
 22.  
*d* Rev. 5. 11  
  
*e* Heb. 2. 16  
  
*f* Act 19.  
 39.  
  
*g* John 17.  
 10. & 15.  
 19. 2 Cor.  
 6. 17.  
*h* Heb. 7.  
 26. 2 Pet.  
 2. 20.  
*Deut.* 14. 2.  
*Titus* 2. 14.  
*i* John 10.  
 16.  
*k* 1 Pet. 2.  
 4. 5.  
*l* 2 Thes. 2.  
 1. Eph. 4.  
 16. Ps. 122  
 3. 1 Thes. 1.  
 1.  
*m* John 15  
*n* Rom. 11.  
 24.

ther, Members to the Head, and they to one another<sup>o</sup>; and lastly an aptitude, order and fitness to each other, to compleat the whole in usefulness and comeliness, *p*.

§. 11. Hence it plainly appears what a Church of God is in the general Nature thereof:

It is a spiritual company of men, separated from the World<sup>a</sup>, congregated and incorporated in Christ Jesus<sup>b</sup>. Congregation is a Genus to Church, it's a spiritual Congregation, and there is no Church but is so in some sense or other; the words in the Old and New Testament always signifie so, *Cobel* and *Ecclesia*: But Congregation seems to be a remoter Genus than Corporation; for every Congregation is not incorporated, neither is every incorporated Congregation a spiritual Body<sup>c</sup>, and therefore a Church; but every Church is a Congregation incorporated, by the Union afore-mentioned, and it's for the end of him whose it is, *viz.* his Glory, in communion with him, and of one Member with another.

*o Eph. 2. 21.*

*p 1 Cor. 12.*

*11, 12, 13.*

*Eph. 4. 16.*

*§ 2. 21.*

*a 2 Cor. 5.*

*17.*

*b 1 Cor. 12.*

*12. 12.*

*c Acts 19.*

*39.*

## CHAP. II.

## Of the Catholick Church.

*A Church defined : A Spiritual Corporation how distinguisht : Corporation what : How belonging to Christ : What Persons a Church is made up of : How Membership comes : Communion : Distribution of Church : The Catholick Church : Catholick Union : Communion : Its not the Subject of Ordinances : No Catholick Visible Church.*

§. 1. **F**ROM what hath bin said in the former Chapter, it appears that a Church is thus defined, viz.

That it is a Spiritual Corporation or Body of Christ <sup>a</sup> the Head, to which many select persons <sup>b</sup>, separated from the World <sup>c</sup> are gathered <sup>d</sup>, and united <sup>e</sup>; and accordingly fitly joined one to another <sup>f</sup> for holy Communion in the Lord <sup>g</sup>.

§. 2. Corporation, or a Political Body, is the next common Nature to a Church, and not Congregation or Assembly; for Congregation is either occasional <sup>a</sup>, or fixed and stated by incorporation, and this either civil or spiritual; a civil is nothing appertaining to our present concern, but the spiritual is; for a Civil is that which belongs to

<sup>a</sup> Eph. 1. 23

Col. 1. 24.

<sup>1</sup> Pet. 2. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Tit. 2. 14.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. 6.

16, 17.

<sup>d</sup> 2 The. 2. 1

<sup>e</sup> Eph. 5.

23, 30.

<sup>f</sup> 1 John

1. 3.

<sup>g</sup> 1 John

1. 3.

<sup>a</sup> Act 19.

39, 41.



a Secular or Republican State; but spiritual is that that belongs to a Spiritual or Ecclesiastick State <sup>b</sup>; hence spiritual here is not confin'd to the sence of invisibility, but is meant of that which is of a heavenly, sacred, and supernatural Nature <sup>c</sup>; wherefore a spiritual Corporation, or Body Politick, is either mystical and invisible, or visible, professed and manifest to the World.

§. 3. A Corporation is a Community constituted by Law, or Charter granted by a Supream Power, whereby it is invested with Priviledges, and a Governing Power, regulated by, and subordinated to, the Honour and Interest of the said supream Power, such are Kingdoms, Cities, Households or Families, or any number of persons bound together in any sociable Bond (is a Society of this Nature) whether implicate or explicate; of these the Conjugal is the least, though the first and most ancient, yea the most honourable of all Civil Societies, being the Root from whence they spring, wherefore the Relation between Christ and his Church is represented thus to us, by the Spirit of God in a most lively manner <sup>a</sup>.

§. 4. The Government, Liberties and Priviledges of the Church are given, as by Charter, to the Lord

*b* 1 Cor. 10.  
4. Gal. 6. 1.  
Matth. 7. 6.  
1 Cor. 7.  
32, 33.  
*c* 1 Cor. 15.  
40. Heb. 8.  
5. & 9. 23.  
1 Pet. 2. 5.

*a* Eph. 5.  
31, 32.



*a* Psa. 2.6. Lord Jesus Christ, by the Father <sup>a</sup>;  
*Mat.* 28.18 the administration of which Power  
*Eck.* 2. 6. by him, is either internal and imme-  
*b* Col. 3.15 diate by his Spirit in the hearts of his  
*Rom.* 8. 9. People, and according to the mea-  
*2 Cor.* 3.8, sure of Grace given to every one,  
*17. Gal.* 5. and of the same nature in the whole  
*16. 18.25* Body <sup>b</sup> of Christ <sup>c</sup>, and is universal  
*1 Pet.* 1.2. and invisible : or Christ administers  
*22.* more externally, visibly and medi-  
*c* Rom. 12. ately in particular, visible Bodies Po-  
*3. 1 John* litick by his Word, instituted Offi-  
*3. 24.* cers and Ordinances, for the sake  
 and edifying of his Universal  
 Church <sup>d</sup>.

*d* Eph. 4.  
 12.

§. 5. Every Church of Christ is  
 made of select Persons, and separa-  
 ted from the World <sup>a</sup>, either by  
 Effectual Calling, and thereby be-  
 come Members of the Mystical Body  
 of Christ <sup>b</sup>, or by a visible Profes-  
 sion and Confederation, and thereby  
 become Members of the visible par-  
 ticular Churches <sup>c</sup>.

§. 6. A People may be gathered  
 together, yea to Christ, so as to hear  
 him or his Messengers<sup>a</sup>, and not there-  
 by become Members of the Body of  
 Christ under any consideration : But  
 they must be so gathered to Christ  
 the Head, as to come into the bond  
 of the Covenant <sup>b</sup>, either by receiv-  
 ing Christ by Faith, and thereby re-  
 stipulating personally to the Cove-  
 nant of Grace, and so joining to the  
 Lord.

*a* 1 Pet. 2.9  
*Tit.* 2. 14.  
*2 Cor.* 6.  
 16. 17.  
*b* Eph. 4. 4.  
*1 Cor.* 12.  
 12.  
*c* 2 Cor. 7.  
 13.

*a* Act 13.43  
*Mat.* 13.2

*b* Ezec. 20.  
 37. Col. 2.  
 19. 1 Cor.  
 6. 17.

Lord. Or it is when a Person doth upon his Profession, actually covenant with a particular Church; by the first he becomes a Member of the Mystical Body <sup>c</sup>, and by the second of a particular Congregation <sup>d</sup>.

§. 7. The end of Church-Union is Communion, which is with Christ the Head and one another <sup>a</sup>: This is in the Spirit <sup>b</sup>, and belongs to the whole Catholick Body; or it is expressed by a visible communion in the Ordinances administred in particular Bodies, and is the Communion of particular Churches <sup>e</sup>.

§. 8 According therefore to the Dispensation of the Fulness of Christs Headship <sup>a</sup> internally and mystically by his Spirit <sup>b</sup>, or externally and ministerially, as the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession <sup>c</sup>. The Church and Body of Christ hath its standing mystical and invisible, or instituted and visible.

§. 9. The Catholick Church is the Mystical Body of Christ made up of all saved ones, Militant and Triumphant <sup>a</sup>, united together in one Spirit <sup>b</sup>, for communion therein accordingly <sup>c</sup>. Or, It is all the Company of saved ones, Militant and Triumphant, embodied in Christ Jesus <sup>d</sup>. It is called the Mystical Body from that hidden standing which it hath in Christ <sup>e</sup>, every Member being undiscernably

<sup>c</sup> Col. 3. 11  
<sup>d</sup> Act. 2. 41

<sup>a</sup> 1 Joh. 1.  
<sup>3.</sup>  
<sup>b</sup> Phil. 2. 1.

<sup>c</sup> Act. 2. 43.  
1 Cor. 10.  
16.

<sup>a</sup> Joh. 1. 16  
Eph. 1. 19.  
§ 3. 7.

Col. 1. 19,  
20.

<sup>b</sup> John 14.  
26. § 16.

13, 14, 15.  
<sup>c</sup> Heb. 3. 1.

§ 8. 6. §  
10. 1. §

12. 23.  
Eph. 4. 12.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 12.  
23, 24.

Eph. 3. 15.  
<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 6.

17.  
<sup>c</sup> Phil. 2. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Ro. 12. 5  
1 Cor. 12.

12.  
<sup>e</sup> Col. 3. 3.

1 Pet. 3. 4.  
Psal. 83. 3.

*f* 1 Cor. 12  
13. Eph. 4.  
3.

*g* 1 Cor. 10  
3, 4.  
*b* 2 Tim. 2.  
19.

*a* Heb. 12.  
22, 23.  
*b* Eph. 1. 10  
& 3. 15.  
*c* Heb. 12.  
22, 23.  
Luk. 10. 20

*a* Ro. 11. 24  
*b* Eph. 2. 10  
*c* Ro. 11. 24  
*d* 1 Cor. 1.  
30. Eph. 4.  
24.  
*e* Gal. 3. 22  
26. 29.  
*f* Gal. 2. 20  
*g* Eph. 4.  
23. & 5. 23  
Fer. 31. 33  
& 32. 40.  
Rom. 12. 5.

discernably (as to Men) united to Christ and one another <sup>f</sup>, and have communion in the Mystery of God, of the Father, and of Christ, they all eat and drink the same spiritual Meat and Drink <sup>g</sup>, whence, the matter, and form of this Body being not infallibly known to any on Earth <sup>h</sup>, either the particular Members Militant or Triumphant, or their bond of Union, or their Heavenly communion in the Spirit, this Church is fitly called the Mystical Body of Christ, to distinguish it from all other considerations of a Church; and hence it hath these distinguishing Properties. 1. Invisibilty as to Men <sup>a</sup>. 2. Universality, as containing all saved ones on Earth, and in Heaven <sup>b</sup>. 3. Perpetuity as to particular Members union and communion, their Names being all written in Heaven <sup>c</sup>.

§. 10. The Catholick Union is that whereby a person being cut off from his corrupt standing in the old Adam, <sup>a</sup> he is created, <sup>b</sup> and implanted in Christ Jesus <sup>c</sup> for righteousness and life <sup>d</sup>, personally restituting by Faith, to the Covenant of Grace made in Christ Jesus <sup>e</sup>, such an one becomes vitally <sup>f</sup>, conjugally and federally united to Christ the Head <sup>g</sup>, and therefore consequentially, and really is a Member of the whole

whole Body of Christ, and of every part being so united to the Head <sup>h</sup>.

*b Eph. 1. 23*

§. 11. Catholick Communion of Saints, is that which is also invisible <sup>a</sup>, and is not only of the Saints Militant one with another, but of the Militant and Triumphant in one body <sup>b</sup>, and consists in a coparticipation of the fulness of the Grace of God in Christ <sup>c</sup>, being all Elect-ed, Redeemed, and Sanctified in him <sup>d</sup>, gradually here <sup>e</sup>, and perfectly conformed to him hereafter <sup>f</sup>, all partakers of the same Spirit in the measure of each one <sup>g</sup>, blessed with the same spiritual Blessings for kind <sup>h</sup>, growing up under the same means of Grace, for substance <sup>i</sup>. As likewise it consists in the exercise of the same Faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, and Love towards one another <sup>k</sup>, with all the fruits of both, as the matter may require, whereby there is always a mutual, Heart-Communion at least, between all the Saints on Earth <sup>l</sup>; and they are come to an actual Communion (as well as Union) with the glorified Spirits of Just Men made Perfect <sup>m</sup>, according to their respective degrees of attainment <sup>n</sup> more or less, whereby they arrive at last, in due season, to such a determined degree of Sanctity, which is their prepared fitness and stature in Christ, for the inheritance of the Saints

*a Phil. 2. 1*

*b Heb. 12. 22, 23.*

*c Joh. 1. 16*

*d Eph. 1. 4, 5, 6.*

*e Phi. 3. 13*

*f Heb. 12. 23.*

*g 1 Cor. 12*

*4. 11.*

*b Eph. 1. 3.*

*i Eph. 4. 15*

*k Eph. 6. 23*

*2 Cor. 4.*

*13. 1 Joh.*

*4. 7, 11, 12*

*2 Tim. 1 13*

*Coloss. 2. 2*

*1 Col. 1. 4.*

*m Heb. 12.*

*22, &c.*

*n Ro. 12. 3.*

*o Col. 1. 12.* Saints in Light <sup>o</sup>, being changed into  
*Eph. 4. 13.* the same Image from Glory to Glory,  
*p 2 Cor. 3.* by the Spirit of the Lord <sup>p</sup>.  
 18.

**§. 12.** The Catholick Church, as  
 such, is not the subject of Officers or  
 Ordinances, nor (it being not visi-  
 ble) can be, Christ never institutnd  
 any Officers whose Power was of an  
 universal extent, except the Apostles,  
 and them only in visible Churches,  
 nor any Ordinances for a Catholick,  
 visible Communion, in which all the  
 Saints living in the same Age were  
*a 1 Cor. 11* to assemble and meet together <sup>a</sup>; for  
 20. the visibility of a Church is always  
 in some Assembly. But the Catho-  
 lick Church, tho it be not (as hath  
 been said) hath many things peculi-  
 ar to it, wherein it hath its prehe-  
 minence above all visible Churches:  
*b 2 Cor. 3.* In that, therein the Administration  
 3. 8. of Grace, and Dispensation of the  
*Gal. 5. 25.* Rule and Government of Christ is  
*Eph. 3. 16.* immediately by his Spirit <sup>b</sup>. 2. In  
*Gal. 6. 18.* that there are many saved ones in  
*2 Tim. 4. 22* this Church that were never Mem-  
*1 Pet. 1. 2.* bers of any visible Church <sup>c</sup>. 3. That  
 22. all the saved ones of any visible  
*1 Joh. 3.* Church, belong to this Church <sup>d</sup>.  
 24. 4. That the Institution of visible  
*c 1 Pet. 1. 1* Churches and Ordinances is for the  
*d Rev. 13.* sake of this Church <sup>e</sup>. 5. All adult  
 8. Persons that are admitted to Mem-  
*Heb. 12. 27* bership in a particular, visible Church,  
 ought to be such as are supposed by  
*e Eph. 4. 11* their  
 12.

their Profession to be Members of this Mystical Body<sup>f</sup>. 6. That of all Churches this shall never be dissolved, or one person lost out of it<sup>g</sup>. 7. That as this Church is sometimes preserved and fed without instituted Ministry and Ordinances, as the *Jewish Church in Babylon*, and the *Gospel-Church in the spiritual, Babylonish Wilderness*<sup>h</sup>, so it shall be most Glorious without them, when it hath arrived at its perfect fulness<sup>i</sup>. 8. There is no false or superfluous Member in this Church, tho many in others, some it may be in the best<sup>k</sup>. 9. Death separates from other Churches, but not from this<sup>l</sup>. 10. The Glorified Saints belong to this, and not to other<sup>m</sup>.

§. 13. The Catholick Church is but one onely<sup>a</sup>, and it cannot be visible as Catholick, for the greatest part are not seen by us, being Saints in Heaven<sup>b</sup>, Elect Infants, and many not known by Profession; and if Men apply Catholick to the Professors of Christianity living at the same time upon the Earth, and call them the Catholick, Visible Church; it is a mistaken Appellation, for they are neither a Visible Church nor Catholick; Not a Visible Church, because, 1. Christ hath instituted none such. 2. They are never seen in *cœtu* or in a Congregation (as

f 1 *Thef.* 1.1. 2 *ep.* 2. 1*Col.* 1. 2.g *Mat.* 16.18. *Psal.*

125. 1.

*John* 10.

28, 29.

b *Rev.* 12.

6.

i *Rev.* 19.

8, 9.

k *Eph.* 5. 27*Col.* 1. 21,

22.

*Rev.* 14. 4.l *Rom.* 8.

35, 38.

m *Heb.* 12.

23.

a *Eph.* 4.4. 5. 1 *Cor.*

12. 12.

b *Eph.* 1. 10

c 3. 15.



c Mat. 13.  
41.

d Eph. 4.  
11.

1 Cor. 12.  
28.

a Visible Church is) nor can be till the last Day <sup>c</sup>. 3. Christ never gave Ordinances for such a Communion. 4. All these are not under any visible bond of Confederation together, which is the form of a Visible Church ; Profession is no Bond, but a proper requisite only thereto. 5. Christ never instituted such a Church Ministry, but what were set in a particular Church, and exercised in such. The Apostles Christ's extraordinary Ministers were first set in the Church at *Jerusalem* <sup>d</sup>, and were first Officers there, and tho their Commission reached to the Planting and Governing other Churches that should succeed, yet they exercised not their Ministry, or Apostolick Power, to any supposed Catholick Church Visible, nor wrote to such, but gathered particular Churches out of the World, and in them settled a distinct Ministry and Ordinances peculiar to each, wherein they exercised their own power, as far as necessary, for their Settlement and Edification. Again, there is no Catholick, Visible Church, for 1. If there be, there is two Catholick Churches, which is a contradiction, and contrary to that Creed called the Apostles. 2. All visible Professors (if a Church) cannot be Catholick, because they are not all the Members of Christ



Christ on Earth, and they that profess (at large at least) are not Members of Christ; many, if not most of them. 3. It is not a Catholick Church, because it's not a Body-Corporate, in any visible manner, nor are capable of answering the ends of such in Government, Order or Priviledges. 4. If there be a Catholick, visible Church, it's rational, there should be a Catholick, visible Pastor; and from these Principles arose the Pope, and the *Papal* Jurisdiction, established throughout the professing World.

In the first Ages after Christ, each particular Church called it self Catholick, from the Profession of that Doctrine which was called the Catholick Faith, because received by all the Churches. Afterward the Word Catholick was applied to a supposed Universal Visible Church, and became not only serviceable to the rising of the Mystery of Iniquity, but a great Foundation of the Antichristian Fabrick which was afterward built thereon, with all the Ecclesiastical Tyranny, and *Papal* Superstitious Pomp imaginable. The *Protestants* that have cast off the Universal Pastorship of one, and will not endure a Catholick, single Pastor, do most of them retain the Notion of an Universal Visible Church,

Church, as also of divers Catholick Pastors, dividing that Catholocy, which they will not allow the Pope, among themselves, each one exercising the Office and Power of a Catholick visible Pastor, where-ever he comes, having bin ordained by a Presbytery of a Catholick Constitution, to a Catholick Pastorship, to the Catholick Church.

To conclude, Our best *Protestants*, in opposition to the *Papists*, have still denied the being of a Catholick, Visible Church, amongst whom was Famous Dr. *Whitaker*, whose Arguments upon this Question against *Duræus* are Quoted by Mr. *Hooker* in his *Survey*, ch. 15. p. 265. Our *Savoy Confession* allows the Name, but denies the Nature, Ch. 26. §. 2. *Institution of Churches*, §. 6. for it saith, its not entrusted with the Administration of any Ordinances, nor hath any Officers to Rule and Govern, as such; and what a kind of Visible Church is that, that is neither the subject of Ordinances or Officers? Mr. *Hooker* saith, Church is the Genus of all particular Churches; but a Visible Church in the generical consideration, can no more be found existing out of individual particular Churches, than a Man can be found existing under the generical consideration of Man, out of individual

dividual Men. But that a *totum aggregatum* of all Churches in this World can be made, and be a visible Church, he denies upon Learned and convincing Reasons, which will stand their Ground against all contradiction. To whom, for brevity sake, we refer the Reader, where also he evinceth that there's no Catholick Visible Church, considered as a *totum Representativum*, i. e. as a Representative Church in all the Pastors; that there cannot be a Catholick, Visible, Representative Church; and that there is no such thing as a Representative Church of any kind, of greater or lesser extent.

§. 14. What the Scripture speaks of a Church, is either of a Church in general, and indefinitely belongs to any, or of a Church in Specie, either Catholick and invisible, or particular and visible, but saith nothing of a Catholick Visible.

## CHAP. III.

*Of a Congregational Church in General.*

*Of Christ's Dispensation as Head : A visible Church defined : Revealed Worship exercis'd first in Families ; then in Instituted Churches : The Foundation of visible Churches laid in Abraham's Covenant : Two parts thereof : The Church of Israel : First Essential, then Organized : The difference between the Mosaical and Gospel Oeconomy : The Church of Israel Congregational.*

*a* 1 Cor. 2.  
11, 12.  
*§* 12. 4.  
*§* 7. 13.  
*Eph.* 4. 3, 7.  
*b* Heb. 3.  
1. 2, 6.

*c* Heb. 9. 1.  
8. 10.  
*Deut.* 29. 1  
*d* Eph. 4.  
12, 13.  
*e* Eph. 3. 21  
*Pf.* 106. 45  
*Exo.* 20. 24  
*Deut.* 4. 8.

§. 1. **T**HE Lord Jesus Christ exerts his Headship, not only by the more immediate Administration of his Spirit <sup>a</sup>, internally in the hearts of his People, whereby he constitutes his Mystical and Catholic Body ; but also as the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession <sup>b</sup>, by external Means of Grace, Constituting and Ordaining particular, visible Churches, and in them, Ministry and Ordinances, suited to the State and respective Ages of the World <sup>c</sup>, for the filling up, and edification of his Mystical Body <sup>d</sup>, and blesteth such accordingly, to his great Glory, and good of his Chosen <sup>e</sup>.

§. 2.

§. 2. A Visible Church is a Particular Assembly of Professing Believers <sup>a</sup>, visibly embodied in Christ <sup>b</sup>, for a stated and holy Communion <sup>c</sup> in one place <sup>d</sup>, with God and one another, in all instituted Ordinances <sup>e</sup>, appertaining to themselves and their immediate seed <sup>f</sup>, for God's Glory in Christ <sup>g</sup>, and their mutual Edification <sup>h</sup>.

§. 3. God's External Worship by Revealed Religion, was first celebrated in *Adam's* Family <sup>a</sup>, and continued in the Families of the Faithful till the time of *Abraham* <sup>b</sup>, which by many are esteemed to have bin so many distinct Churches, and accordingly distinguish particular Churches into Oeconomick or Family, and Congregational. But others think, that tho God appointed to those Patriarchs a solemn Family-Worship, yet that a Church was not instituted till *Abraham's* time, when the first Foundation of an Instituted Church was laid in the Covenant that God made with, and Sealed to *Abraham* and his Seed <sup>c</sup>, for before this Covenant, (tho God was Worshipped in Families,) there seems not to have bin any Churches made up of divers Families, and therefore not Congregational, nor any Church-Covenant, or Seals thereof: Hence he is said to have received the Sign of Circum-

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 1. 2

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor.

12. 27.

<sup>c</sup> Act 9. 31.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. 11

20.

<sup>e</sup> Act 2. 42

<sup>f</sup> Act. 2. 39

<sup>g</sup> Isa. 61. 9 &

65. 23.

<sup>h</sup> Eph. 6. 4.

<sup>g</sup> Eph. 3. 21

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 14

5. 12. 26.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 4. 3,

4.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. 11.

5. 7, 8.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. 12.

2. & 17. 1, 2

cision,

d *Ro. 4. 11.*e *Ro. 4. 13.*  
*Gal. 3. 18,*  
*19.*f *Ro. 4. 16.*g *Rom. 4.*  
*11. 16.*

cision, the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith which he had being uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all that believe both circumcised and uncircumcised<sup>d</sup>, *i. e.* of Believers whose Church-Covenant was Sealed by an Instituted Seal appropriated thereto; or else how was *Abraham* said to be a Father to all that should afterward believe, any more than *Noah* was, or *Sem*? and moreover, because in this Covenant, Christ the Head of the Church was explicitly contained<sup>e</sup>, who indeed, was promised as Heir of the World, through the Righteousness of Faith, therefore the Apostle tells us, that the Promise of Christ, and all Church-Priviledges and Ordinances of his Institution, are sure not only to *Abraham's* natural Seed, but to all who are of the Faith of *Abraham*, who is the Father of all Professing Believers, and Covenanting with God for themselves and Seed, by vertue of his receiving the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, which he had in his uncircumcision<sup>f</sup>, so that the stress of *Abraham's* Father-hood to the Faithful, is not laid upon his Eminent Faith alone, but upon his receiving an Instituted Seal of the Righteousness of Faith to himself and his infant-Seed<sup>g</sup>, and in this respect, as he is called the Father, so each Believer is his



his Seed in Christ <sup>h</sup>, receiving a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith to himself and Seed, as *Isaac* did <sup>i</sup>.

*b Gal. 3. 26, 27, 28.*  
*i Gal. 4. 28*

§. 4. In *Abraham's* Covenant was contained the Promise and Blessing of Christ to his Church, in all Ages, both in respect of its Mystical and Visible relation to him as its Head <sup>a</sup>, and therefore the establishment of Church-Membership was made in *Abraham* to the professing covenanting-Believer un-alterably, as a substantial part of the Blessing which was to come on the *Gentiles*, and not to be removed <sup>b</sup>. There were two things manifestly in *Abraham's* Covenant. 1. The substantial and abiding part of that Covenant both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, both internal and Mystical, yea and external, as to a Church visible state, Membership and Priviledges, all which came upon the *Gentiles* <sup>c</sup>. 2. There was the peculiar and moveable part of *Abraham's* Covenant, which was the increase of his Seed into a National Church <sup>d</sup>, the growth and progress it should make through Bondage and Pilgrimage to an external and Typical Rest <sup>e</sup>, with all worldly Plenty and Prosperity <sup>f</sup>, and most especially, the form and manner of that Church-Worship, according as was after established by God's Ordination and Institution <sup>g</sup>, for the

*a Gal. 3. 8, 9, 14.*  
*Ephes. 1. 3.*

*b Gal. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.*  
*Heb. 12. 27*

*c Gen. 17. 13, 19.*  
*Eph. 3. 6.*  
*c. 1. 3.*  
*d Gen. 12. 2 & 18. 18.*  
*e Gen. 15. 13, 14, 16, 18.*  
*f Josh. 5. 6, 7. & 22. 4. & 21. 43*  
*g Deut. 4. 7, 8. 31, 32. 10 37.*  
*Exo. 25. 40*

*b* Heb. 9.  
9, 10.

*i* Act 7. 8.

32. 37, 38.

Heb. 3. 2, 3

§ 8. 5.

Gal. 5. 3, 4.

*k* Heb. 8. 5.

8. 13. § 9. 9

Col. 2. 11,

17.

*l* Rom. 4. 11

§ 15. 8.

*m* Gal. 3. 9

14.

*n* Ro. 4. 12,

16. Gal. 3.

26, 27.

§ 4. 28.

Col. 2. 10,

11, 12.

Acts 2. 39.

Ro. 15. 8, 9.

Isa. 61. 9.

ch. 65. 9.

*a* Ex. 12. 3

Num. 20. 4

Ex. 12. 40,

41. § 16.

22.

Act. 7. 38.

*b* Act 7. 38.

44, 45.

time then being, till the coming of Christ <sup>h</sup>; Circumcision it self being a part of that moveable Fabrick, begun in *Abraham*, and perfected in *Moses* <sup>i</sup>; it was taken away with the other observances <sup>k</sup>; but a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith whereby *Abraham* became the Father of all Believers *Jews* and *Gentiles*, was not taken away <sup>l</sup>, but was a great part of the Blessing that came on the believing *Gentiles* <sup>m</sup>, viz. that the Professing, Covenanting-Believer should both he and his Infant-Seed, receive a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, as the great Priviledge of Church-Membership belonging to both, as to *Abraham* and his, they being his Seed by Faith as *Isaac* was <sup>n</sup>.

§. 5. The Church of *Israel* before *Moses*, was Congregational, and in a visible Covenant with God, and truly an essential Church <sup>a</sup>, but not organized with a Ministry and Ordinances of God's Institution for a due and orderly Worship of God till *Moses* <sup>b</sup>: which state and standing of that Church from *Abraham* to *Moses*, and partly in its Wilderness condition, was a great Type of the Gospel-Church in its persecuted, bewildered and unsettled state, under its great Adversaries, wherein it hath been mostly fed by God, and preserved by him in its Mystical State and

and standing, as was before hinted<sup>c</sup>.

c *Rev.* 12.  
6. 13.

§. 6. The Administration of the external Constitution by Christ in the Ministry and Ordinances of the Church of *Israel*<sup>a</sup>, was of a distinct form and manner, from the Church Administration, according to the Gospel Oeconomy, Ordinances and Order<sup>b</sup>. For the Administration of the Ecclesiastical State and standing of that Church, was faulty in respect of the Ordinance of Circumcision itself<sup>c</sup>, and *Mosaick* Vail, drawn over Gospel Mysteries<sup>d</sup>, the encouragement to Gods Service by temporal Promises, the Typical and Legal Nature of the Sanctuary, Ministry<sup>e</sup> and Ordinances called carnal<sup>f</sup>, and worldly<sup>g</sup>, imperfect not reaching the Conscience<sup>h</sup>, *Moses* the Mediator<sup>i</sup> thereof, and *Aaronick* Priesthood<sup>k</sup>, both typical of the true Mediator<sup>l</sup>, and High-Priest of our Profession: It was a faulty Covenant<sup>m</sup>, and called by the Apostle the Old Testament<sup>n</sup>, and is all done away as a shadow in the coming of Christ<sup>o</sup>, and his bringing in to us a better, because clearer ground of Faith and Hope<sup>p</sup>, by spiritual Promises<sup>q</sup>, and a more Heavenly Gospel Ministry and Ordinances<sup>r</sup>, and is therefore called a New Covenant<sup>s</sup>, the blessings whereof are *Abraham's*, now

a *Acts* 7. 38

b *Heb.* 9. 1.  
9, 10, 11.

c *Acts* 7. 8.  
*Gal.* 5. 3, 4.

d *2 Cor.* 3. 14

e *Heb.* 8. 6.

f *Heb.* 8. 9

g *2 Cor.* 3. 9.

h *Heb.* 8. 5.

i *Heb.* 9. 10

j *7.* 16.

k *Heb.* 9. 1

l *ch.* 9. 11.

m *10.* 1, 2.

n *7.* 19.

o *Gal.* 3. 20

p *Heb.* 7.

q 11, 23.

r *13.* 8, 4, 5.

s *3.* 1.

t *Heb.* 8. 7

u *2 Cor.* 3.

v 14.

w *Ibid.*

x *Heb.* 7.

y 19.

z *Eph.* 1. 3.

aa *Heb.* 8. 5

ab *9.* 23.

ac *Heb.* 8. 8.

## 28 *Of a Congregat. Church in General.*

t *Gal.* 3. 14 'come on the *Gentiles* <sup>t</sup>, heavenly and  
 v *Eph.* 2. 6. spiritual in high places <sup>v</sup>, much more  
 w 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. Glorious, the Ministration of the  
 x *Heb.* 3. 2, his own House <sup>x</sup>, wherein he is more  
 6. to be prized, and worthy of more  
 y *Ibid.* honour than *Moses* a servant could  
 ever be capable of <sup>y</sup>; Christ's being a  
 more excellent Ministry in that he  
 was a better Mediator of a better  
 z *Heb.* 8. 6 Testament <sup>z</sup>, confirming and sealing  
 a *Heb.* 9. 16, 17. it with his own Blood <sup>a</sup>, and now  
 liveth in the full execution of this  
 b *Heb.* 8. 25 last Will and Testament <sup>b</sup>, and the  
*Eph.* 4. 11 glorious Witness thereof before God,  
 c *Rev.* 1. 5, Angels and Men <sup>c</sup>, standing now  
 18. our High-Priest, set down at the  
 Right Hand of the Majesty on High,  
 a Minister of the Sanctuary, and true  
 d *Heb.* 8. 1, 2. Tabernacle which God pitched and  
 not Man <sup>d</sup>.

§. 7. The Constitution of the  
 Church of *Israel*, tho it was Na-  
 tional <sup>a</sup>, as being made up according  
 to that part of the promise, peculiar  
 to *Abraham's* natural Seed, yet it was  
 Congregational <sup>b</sup>, according to the  
 other part of the Promise, not to be  
 shaken or removed <sup>c</sup>, because it was  
 incorporated into one Church by a  
 visible profession of, and subjection to  
*Abraham's* Covenant <sup>d</sup>, for such as  
 were Infant-Church-Members recei-  
 ved the Seal of the Righteousness of  
 Faith,

faith, and when they became adult and stood not to this Profession, they forfeited their Church-Membership; and thus it was with *Ismael* and *Esau*<sup>e</sup>, upon which both, with their Seed, fell off from the Church, tho the natural Seed of *Abraham* and *Isaac*. And afterward, when the Seed of *Israel* grew up into a National Church, in all their Apostacies they were charged with the breach of *Abraham's* Covenant<sup>s</sup>, or that made with their Fathers, which was the same, as therein going a whoring from God, and forfeiting the Right of Church-Membership, and becoming a *Loammi*. Moreover, in all their great Reformati- ons we find their returning to the said Covenant, and often their publick renewing and recognition thereof<sup>h</sup>. 2. It appears, in that all the House of *Israel*, as to their stated Church-Worship, worshipped under one visible Pastor (in their State after *Moses* his Settlement) one High-Priest, and at one Altar, in one place<sup>i</sup>; and therefore the stated Church-Worship was attended in one Assembly, Tabernacle or Temple, Thrice every Year, where the whole Congregation had Communion in one and the same Worship, and acts of Worship<sup>k</sup>. 3. This People were a separated People from all others in the World<sup>l</sup>. 4. *Jerobo-*

e *Gen.* 21.  
10, 12.  
*Gal.* 4. 30.  
f *Gen.* 25.  
31.

g *Deut.* 31.  
16. *Ezek.*  
16. 8.  
*Jer.* 11. 10.

h 2 *Chron.*  
34. 31.  
*Psal.* 105.  
4, 5, &c.  
*Ezra* 10. 3.  
i *Lev.* 1. 3.  
*Deut.* 12.  
14. & 14.  
23. & 16.  
2, 7. 11, 15.  
16.  
*Josh.* 22.  
18, 23.  
k *Deut.* 16.  
16.  
l *Lev.* 20.  
24. *Deut.*  
4. 7. 34.  
cap. 7. 6.  
& 14. 2.  
*Psa.* 135. 4.

m: 1 *King*  
11. 30, 31.

n *Act* 13.  
15.

o 1 *King*  
22. 43.  
p 2 *King*  
18. 4.

am's Apostacy was condemned by God as an actual Rent and Schism from the visible Church that statedly worshipped God at *Jerusalem*<sup>m</sup>. 5. The Synagogue-Worship was not the Church-Worship, neither was the daily Sacrifice, or others, nor any holy Convocations belonging unto them, any more than the meer reading of *Moses* and the Prophets, and Exposition thereof at most sometimes<sup>n</sup>. 6. All Church-Worship, of special communion, as offering Sacrifices elsewhere, than at the place chosen by God for that purpose, was condemned; witness the frequent complaint made against their High-Places under the Reign, even of their best Kings<sup>o</sup>, till *Hezekiah*'s time that destroyed them all<sup>p</sup>.

§. 8. That a Congregational Church is of Divine Institution, appears by these Reasons.

1. Either a Congregational Church is of Divine Institution, or else God hath no instituted Church; for there is no other visible Church of God's Institution spoken of in Scripture.

2. The Church of *Israel* was Congregational (as hath bin proved) and none will deny that to be of God's Institution.

3. The



3. The exprefs Type of a Congregational Church under the Gospel was of God's Institution, therefore the Antitype, or thing Typified much more <sup>a</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> *Rev.* 1. 20.  
*Heb.* 8. 5, 6  
3. 5, 6.

4. This Church is Prophefied of by the Prophets of old <sup>b</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> *Iſa.* 56.  
5. 6, 7.  
*Eze.* 43. 11  
*Mal.* 1. 11,  
12.

5. Chriſt and his Apoſtles planted ſuch Churches, as appears throughout the Hiſtory of the *Acts*.

6. Theſe Chriſt and his Apoſtles own'd to be his truly inſtituted Churches, not only by the Epiſtles wrote to them by the Apoſtles, but by thoſe ſent to them by Chriſt himſelf <sup>c</sup>.

<sup>c</sup> *Rev.* 2. 3.  
3.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of a Gospel Visible, or Congregational Church.*

*Restipulation to Abraham's Covenant double : A Gospel Visible Church defined : A visible Church always particular, not Catholick : The Catholick not the Genus of a particular Church, but a distinct Species of Church in general : Corporation distinguished into its Species : The Political relation of a Church to Christ : The immediate matter of a visible Church : What is the form of it : Separation inseparable from it : The immediate Infant-Seed Members by Covenant : Communion the end of Church-Union.*

§. 1. **H**AVING shewed what a Visible or Congregational Church is in general, when the first Institution of it was, and where founded, viz. in *Abraham's Covenant of Circumcision*; that for the substance of the said Covenant it was immutable, both as to the Person, Natures, Offices, Ministry, Sacrifice and Exaltation of Christ the Head, both Mystical and Political <sup>a</sup>; so as to the Body of Christ the Church in its Catholick <sup>b</sup> or Visible relation to him

<sup>a</sup> Gal. 3.8  
cap. 4. 26,  
27.

<sup>b</sup> Eph. 3.5,  
6.  
Acts 15. 7.  
9.

him<sup>c</sup>, (setting aside only the difference of Oeconomies and the Administration thereof, called the Old and New Testaments<sup>d</sup>) it is the everlasting Covenant well ordered in all things and sure<sup>e</sup>, to which as to the more mysterious and hidden part under the efficacious work of the Spirit, every sincere-hearted Believer doth restipulate when he becomes an actual-Member of the Mystical Body<sup>f</sup>; and as to the more External, Visible and Political part, he doth visibly restipulate by confederation and embodying to Christ the Political Head<sup>g</sup>, and with a particular Congregation a Political Body of Christ.

§. 2. The Ecclesiastical Blessings, as belonging to the visible State, Standing and Priviledges of a Congregational Church, unalterable under either Dispensation, are these especially: *First*, Its Fœderal Constitution<sup>a</sup>. *Secondly*, Its Divine Institution<sup>b</sup>. *Thirdly*, The Nature of its Church-Membership<sup>c</sup>, and the professing Right thereto to the Believing Parent covenanting, and his immediate Infant-Seed in him<sup>d</sup>. *Fourthly*, The Seal of the Righteousness of Faith given to both Parent and Seed. *Fifthly*, The Ministry of the Gospel, with all other Ordinances of Christ's Institution, which each is capable of for spiritual advantage, in the commu-

c *Deut.* 14.  
2.

i *Pet.* 2.9.

d *Heb.* 8.6

§ 9. 15.

e *2 Sam.*

23. 5.

2 *Cor.* 3. 11

f 2 *Cor.* 11

2. 3.

*Heb.* 12 22

g *Isa.* 56.

6, 7. § 44.

5.

a *Isa.* 61.

8. 9. *Gen.*

17. 9, 10.

b *Ibid.*

c *Rom.* 4.

11, 12, 16.

*Gal.* 3. 27,

28, 29.

d *Isa.* 65.

23.

chap. 44. 3.

*Gal.* 4. 28.

nion of the respective Members thereof<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>e</sup> Gal. 3.

7. 8.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Pet. 2.

5.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. 12.

4. 5.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. 1, 2

<sup>d</sup> Gal. 3.

26, 27, 28.

<sup>e</sup> 4. 28.

<sup>e</sup> 2 Cor. 6.

17.

<sup>f</sup> 2 Cor. 8.

5. Isa. 56. 6, 7. <sup>g</sup> 1 John 1. 3, 7. Phil. 1. 5. 1 Cor. 11.

20. <sup>h</sup> Mat. 28. 20. <sup>i</sup> 1 Cor. 14. 23. <sup>k</sup> 1 Cor. 10. 31.

<sup>l</sup> Phil. 1. 9, 11.

§. 3. A Visible Church is a spiritual<sup>a</sup> Body<sup>b</sup> of Believers<sup>c</sup>, with their immediate Seed<sup>d</sup>, separate from the World<sup>e</sup>, and given up unto Christ and one another in a Publick Covenant<sup>f</sup>, for fellowship<sup>g</sup> in all instituted Worship and Ordinances<sup>h</sup> in one place<sup>i</sup>, to the Glory of God<sup>k</sup> and their own Salvation<sup>l</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Rev. 1. 20  
Col. 2. 5.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor.

11. 20.

<sup>c</sup> 14. 23.

Act 2. 41.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. 1, 2

<sup>i</sup> 1 Thes. 1. 1

§. 4. A visible Church is always particular<sup>a</sup>, a Catholick being not visible as hath bin shewed: for a Visible Church is not a Society gathered together and made up of all the select People in the world, there is none such can be here; but its such as is limited to a People and Place, and is the subject of the Ministry and Ordinances there<sup>b</sup>. And though it should be supposed that there is a Catholick, visible Church (which cannot be granted) it is to be observed, that the Spirit of God, speaks always of Churches in their respective places, as distinct Churches, each one entire in it self<sup>c</sup>; not one Epistle wrote to any under the Name of the Catholick visible Church, nor to any Church or Congregation as part of

of it, but we read of writing to a Church in such a place <sup>d</sup>; and divers Churches in a place (as Country or Province) we find distinguished by the places where they were, as Town, City in which they were <sup>e</sup>. Again, each particular Congregation had its proper Elders relating to it <sup>f</sup>, and not to others, or to a Catholick visible. Lastly, the Church at *Jerusalem*, the first Primitive was indeed the biggest and largest we read of, but to make it any other than a particular Congregation, is as weak Divinity as it is Logick, for it continued to Assemble together in one place <sup>g</sup>, and was called but one Church, and was not the Church that was visibly Catholick, for it contained not the Churches of *Samaria* <sup>h</sup> and *Antioch* <sup>i</sup>, soon after gathered.

§. 5. Wherefore the Subject defined by us, is a particular Church; not because the Catholick is a Genus of it, but because the Catholick, and a Particular, are two distinct Species of Church, by proper Adjuncts, *e. gr.* A particular Church is visible here on Earth *in coetu* <sup>a</sup>, which the Catholick Church is not. It assembles in one place <sup>b</sup>, which the Catholick cannot here: It's the subject of external Ordinances, Officers and Discipline <sup>c</sup>, which the Catholick is not:

d *Revel.* 3. 1, &c.

i *Cor.* 1. 1.

e *Gal.* 1. 2

*Rev.* 1. 4.

f *Act.* 20.

17.

*Phil.* 1. 1.

*Act* 14. 23.

g *Act* 5. 12.

h *Act* 9. 31.

i *ib.* 15. 2, 3.

a *Act* 5. 12

b i *Cor.* 11.

20.

c *Phil.* 1. 1.

i *Cor.* 5. 4.

d 2 Cor. 9.  
13.

not : The Members are known by visible Profession and confederation<sup>d</sup>, which the Members of the Catholick are not known by.

a Rom. 12.  
4, 5.  
1 Cor. 12. 27

b 1 Cor. 3.  
1 Gal. 6. 1.  
c 1 Pet. 2. 5  
d 1 Cor. 12  
3. 3, 7. 8.  
Eph. 5. 19.  
1 Pet. 2. 5.  
9.

e Col. 1. 16  
18. 5. 2. 5.  
1 Pet. 2. 5.

f Heb. 3.  
1, 6.

§. 6. The next general Nature (as we have shewed) to a Church is a Body Politick or Corporation, for Body is thus distributed in Scripture Acceptation, it is Natural or Political; Political is Civil or Spiritual; the Spiritual is a Church, which is a spiritual Body Politick; and that is invisible and Catholick, or visible and Particular. Here we are on a Particular Congregation, which we say is a spiritual, visible Body Politick<sup>a</sup>. That it is a Body in a Political sence is most manifest, for the Scripture calling it so, it must be concluded, that it cannot be so in any rational sence, but as it is a Body Corporate, not Civil but Spiritual; it being of spiritual Matter<sup>b</sup>, spiritual Form<sup>c</sup>, and for spiritual Ends<sup>d</sup>. Neither is it invisibly spiritual, for spiritual things are both visible and invisible<sup>e</sup>, but its spiritual in opposition to civil. Hence the Church we are speaking of is a visible spiritual Body-Politick, and as such having a special and peculiar Relation to Christ the Political Head<sup>f</sup>, wherein the special Glory and Excellency of this Church doth ly.



§.7. The great Concern therefore of this Body, is its true Political Relation to Christ, as the head thereof <sup>a</sup>, that it be by its visibility, at least, Christ's Corporation <sup>b</sup>. 1. By his Purchase <sup>c</sup>. 2. By his Charter and Institution, being founded upon his Doctrine, Rules and Appointments <sup>d</sup>. 3. That the Dispensation be Christ's, so that all things therein transacted be in the Name and Power of the Lord Jesus Christ <sup>e</sup>, and to God's Glory by him <sup>f</sup>. 4. That the Matter of this Church be visibly approved as Members of Christ's Mystical Body, and so in Christ Jesus by Faith visibly at least <sup>g</sup>. 5. That their association into one Body be by explicit Covenant first to Christ the Head, and to one another as visible Members of Christ, supposed faithful and Loyal to him <sup>h</sup>. 6. The great ends of it are, 1. A freedom in Christ <sup>i</sup>, and the Spirit <sup>k</sup>, from all other Political Heads, as such (in this spiritual relation) and all pretendedly Ecclesiastical <sup>l</sup> or Civil <sup>m</sup>, or Pastoral compulsion, and Arbitrary Government within themselves <sup>n</sup>. 2. The great enjoyment of the Presence and Blessing of Christ <sup>o</sup>. 3. Their communion in Christ with one another <sup>p</sup>, and thereby their edification in Grace <sup>q</sup>, and continued growth in Christ <sup>r</sup>, in the solemn and sacred use

a Eph. 4.

15, 16.

b 1 Cor. 12.

27.

c Act. 20.

28.

d Mat. 28.

20.

e Col. 3. 17

f Eph. 3. 21

g Phil. 1. 1

2 Cor. 6.

15, 16.

h Rom. 15.

6, 7.

I Isa. 56. 7.

1 Pet. 5. 9.

i Gal. 5. 1.

k 2 Cor. 3.

17.

l 2 The. 2. 4

m Isa. 26.

13.

n 1 Pet. 5.

3.

3 John 10.

o Rev. 3. 1.

Eph. 1. 3.

p 1 Cor. 10

16.

q 1 Cor. 14

26.

r Eph. 4. 15

f *Eph.* 1.3.*Col.* 2. 19.*Eph.* 1.18,

19.

a *1Pet.* 2.5b *Eph.* 5.

30.

c *Fam.* 2.

18.

*Act* 11.23d *Act* 2.39e *1 King*

6, 7.

f *1Pet.* 2.5*Eph.* 2.21.

use of all his holy Institutions and Appointments : All which they look upon (not as Bondage) but their desirable Enjoyments and Priviledges granted to them by the Charter and Seal of the New Testament <sup>f</sup>.

§. 8. As it is and ought to appear a spiritual Body <sup>a</sup>, and therefore visible ; it must be made up of such Members as to the adult part are Professors of their Mystical Relation to Christ <sup>b</sup> ; for the truest Believer cannot be known but by such Profession that must come into visibility, before any one can have any approved Church-Membership, or any fair or plausible pretence to a right thereto <sup>c</sup>.

2. Tho Professing Believers, with their immediate Infant-Seed are the true and fit Matter for a Visible Church <sup>d</sup>, yet is not their Profession the Visible Form of a Church : Stones may be good and well squared for a Building, but do not give Form to any House <sup>e</sup> till they be visibly conjoyned and knit together to a Corner-Stone <sup>f</sup>, therefore the Band must be visible in this Building of Christ ; all the fitted parts, as living Stones, freely coming to Christ the Corner-Stone, and by common consent uniting themselves to Christ and one another, to make a spiritual House, a Habitation of God by his

his Spirit <sup>g</sup>, every one of which, being supposedly at least, united to Christ the Mystical Head <sup>h</sup>, and so becoming living Stones, do now come to Christ by a second explicate visible Union in a Political Body of his <sup>i</sup>, which can be no other than Confederation, whereby each one, with his immediate Infant-Seed, is given up unto Christ, and associated to the said Members in one Corporation or Body Politick.

§. 9. That explicate confederation gives form to a visible Church, appears beyond all doubt, 1. From the nature of its being a Body Politick or Corporation <sup>a</sup>, for all Civil Corporations are in this manner made a Body. 2. Men may be very honest and good Subjects under the King's Government, but not incorporated in any distinct Body Corporate under the King. 3. They that are incorporated, are bound by a promise of Fidelity to the King the Political Head, and by a promise obliging to Membership with, and fidelity to that particular Body. 4. There is no Person governable by any such Body Politick, that is not thus bound to it by such confederations, for what hath it to do with such as are without <sup>b</sup>? 5. It is not fit that any should partake of the granted Liberties and Privileges

<sup>g</sup> Eph. 2.  
21, 22.

<sup>h</sup> Eph. 4. 15

<sup>i</sup> Rom. 12.  
1, 4, 5.

<sup>a</sup> Ro. 12. 4,  
5. 1 Cor. 12  
12, 13, 14,  
27.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 5.  
12.

ledges of any particular Society, without becoming a fast Member thereof; and how can any one that is at his choice whether he will or will not, be made a fast Member thereof, without a declared mutual obligation between him and such Society? As all these Reasons hold good, as well in a spiritual Body Politick, as a Civil, and bear a great Analogy with the Natural Body of a Man therein: So likewise it appears in the second place from the Word of God, speaking of a Church as such a Body. 1. The first constitution of a Congregational-Church in *Abraham* and his Seed, was by Covenant <sup>c</sup>, and so the great Re-formations thereof afterwards, were by renewing *Abraham's* Covenant. 2. All the descriptions of a Visible Church by allusion to a Natural Body <sup>d</sup>, to a House <sup>e</sup> or Temple, hold forth such an explicite Band of parts together as well as the whole to the Head, as parts of a Body or House are knit together, which nothing can do in a Body Politick but a voluntary Confederation. 3. The expressions of joining to the Lord, and adding to the Church <sup>f</sup>. 4. Church-Covenanting under the Gospel is foretold <sup>g</sup>. 5. The Apostle is express about it, when he treats purposely and directly of the true mat-  
ter

<sup>c</sup> *Gen.* 17.  
2, 10.

<sup>d</sup> *Ro.* 12. 4,  
5.

<sup>e</sup> *Eph.* 2.  
21, 22.

<sup>i</sup> *Pet.* 2. 5

<sup>f</sup> *Act.* 2. 47  
*Es.* 13, 14.  
<sup>g</sup> *Isa.* 56. 6  
*Ec.* 62. 5.

ter of a Church, and fæderal form of it <sup>h</sup>. 6. Professed Subjection to the Gospel is explicite covenanting <sup>i</sup>, as also in that place speaking of giving up ones self to the Lord and one another <sup>k</sup>.

§. 10. Hence as it is a Covenanting Body, so a Body separate from the World Heathenish and Antichristian <sup>a</sup>. A Church cannot be a peculiar and select People without separating from communion in Church Ordinances with visible unbelievers, and from false Worship of all kinds whatever <sup>b</sup>.

§. 11. The immediate Infant-Seed of the Confederate-Believer, becomes given up unto God, and receives Church-Membership in and by the Parents Covenant <sup>a</sup>; for such was the Constitution of the first Congregational-Church which remains un-altered: for the righteousness of faith, and the Seal of the righteousness of Faith remaining to Believers <sup>b</sup>, as the Gospel preached <sup>c</sup> to *Abraham* was the Blessing that came on the *Gentiles* <sup>d</sup>, it belongs to them to whom he was the Father, even in that respect <sup>e</sup>, and they are Heirs according to the Promise <sup>f</sup>, being the Children of God by Faith in Christ <sup>g</sup>, are blessed with faithful *Abraham* <sup>h</sup>; yea as many as have bin baptised into Christ have put on Christ as *Abraham*

h 2 Cor. 6.  
15, 16, &c.  
Act. 11. 23  
i 2 Cor. 9.  
13.  
k 2 Cor. 8.  
5.

a 1 Cor. 10  
19. 20.  
Rev. 18. 3  
2 Cor. 6. 16  
17.  
b 2 Cor. 6.  
15, 16.  
1 Pet. 2. 9.

a 1 Cor. 7.  
14.  
Gal. 4. 28.  
Rom. 9. 8.

b Ro. 4. 11,  
12.  
c Gal. 3. 8.  
d *ibid.* 14.  
e Rom. 4.  
11. 16.

f Gal. 3. 29  
g *ib.* v. 26.  
*ib.* v. 9.  
h *ib.* v. 27

*ham*

i Ro. 4. 11,  
12.

kGal. 3. 28.  
l Ro. 4. 16.

mEph. 3. 6.

nGal. 3. 17

o Rom. 9.  
6, 7, 8.

ham did, both in respect of the righteousness of Faith, and the Seal thereof<sup>i</sup>, the Priviledge he hath for himself and Seed in Covenant, and both Jew and Greek, Male and Female, are all one (as to this respect) in Christ Jesus<sup>k</sup>. And being Abraham's Seed<sup>l</sup>, yea his Children as Isaac was, they inherit the Blessing in the righteousness of Faith and the Seal thereof, to themselves and Seed. But this Blessing as it comes upon the Gentiles as fellow-heirs of the same Promise made to Abraham<sup>m</sup>, which neither the making or abrogation of Moses his Constitution did or could disannul<sup>n</sup>, comes not on this or that Nation, or Race of any Family specified, as it was upon Abraham's, but it comes only in the right of a confederating Believer<sup>o</sup>, and therefore on him and his immediate Seed only; for the Child of a Believer when he comes to be adult, by his non-profession of Abraham's Faith, and non-covenanting accordingly, his Membership ceaseth, and his Seeds; and therefore the Grandfather's Faith cannot give the Grand-Child any right to the seal of the righteousness of Faith; but the Infants Membership and Right to any Church-Priviledge, as it must ly in the immediate Parent, so the unbelief of the immediate Seed, cuts off from any right to that Seal.



§. 12. The ends of Visible Church-Union are very great, viz. The constant and frequent waiting and attending upon God in his Worship, and that by a People assembling together for this end and purpose, with one Heart and Mind <sup>a</sup>, in one Place <sup>b</sup>, and therefore in communion with Christ the Head <sup>c</sup>, and all the Members of the Body together <sup>d</sup>, whereby each Member is nourished and edified, and grows up into Christ the Head in all things <sup>e</sup>; the Ordinances of communion the immediate ends of Visible Church-Union; The stedfast abode therein <sup>f</sup>, the offering up spiritual Sacrifices unto God acceptable through Christ <sup>g</sup>, and shewing forth the Vertues of him that hath called them out of Darkness into his marvellous Light <sup>h</sup>.

a *Acts* 2.

4. 2.

b *1 Cor.* 11

20.

c *1 Cor.* 10.

16, 17.

d *1 Joh.* 1.

3.

e *Eph.* 4. 15f *Act* 2. 42g *1 Pet.* 2. 5h *ibid.* v. 9

## CHAP. V.

*Of Gathering a Gospel Visible Church.*

*Christ first in Gathering a Church :  
The Means of Grace by Conversion,  
and Good Men exciting, Instruments :  
How a People thus moved come into  
a Body : How Incorporated orderly,  
without confusion : What ordinary  
Christian Prudence is to be used, and  
Questions put : An Essential Church  
a true Church as to being, but not as  
to well-being : A Person excepted  
against to defer for that time.*

§. 1. **A** Visible Gospel-Church is made by gathering divers select Persons unto Jesus Christ in a spiritual Body, and relation to him as their Political Head <sup>a</sup>, and it is Christ himself the great Shepherd that first gathers them, seeketh his Sheep, and brings them to his Fold and Pasture <sup>b</sup>, perfecting them in every good Work to do his Will through the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant <sup>c</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> *Eze.* 34.

11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Thef.* 2.1

<sup>b</sup> *John* 10.

9. 14, 16.

<sup>c</sup> *Heb.* 13.

20, 21.

<sup>a</sup> *Eph.* 2.14

<sup>b</sup> *ib.* v.17.

<sup>c</sup> *Act* 26.

18.

§. 2. Christ, as he is our Peace<sup>a</sup>, so he cometh and preacheth Peace by the Ministry of the Everlasting Gospel <sup>b</sup>, and accompanying it with his Spirit, blesteth it to the turning Men from Darkness to Light <sup>c</sup>, working

ing

ing Faith and Love in Sinners Hearts<sup>d</sup>, whereby they come to embrace the Blessings of *Abraham's* Covenant, and profess the same<sup>e</sup>.

d 1 Tim. 1. 14.

e Act 15.

11.

a Gal. 1. 15

Acts 2. 40.

§. 3. When God hath called some thus through his Grace<sup>a</sup> in any place, and they have tasted that the Lord is gracious<sup>b</sup>, they begin to see and behold, how richly Christ's Glory and all the Mysteries thereof are displayed in the Churches<sup>c</sup> his Golden Candlesticks<sup>d</sup>, and therefore seek after all ways and means provided by Christ, for their coming as lively Stones to Christ the Corner-Stone<sup>e</sup>, and of becoming a spiritual House, or Habitation of God by his Spirit, that they may offer unto God spiritual acceptable Sacrifices in and through Jesus Christ, call upon, and encourage one another, saying, *come let us go up to the House of the Lord<sup>f</sup>. and he will teach us his ways*; and some that are eminent in Faith and Holiness excite and stir up others to their Duty, and claim of their Priviledges in Christ, as *Barnabas* did at *Antioch*<sup>g</sup>, when he saw the Grace of God in the new Converts, made through the Ministry of the Disciples scattered by the Persecution from the Church at *Jerusalem*, he exhorts them to *cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart<sup>h</sup>. i.e.* by an explicate Church-Covenant, for he saw as to the

b 1 Pet. 2. 3

c Eph. 3. 9, 10.

d Rev. 1.

20.

1 Pet. 2. 5.

e Eph. 2. 21, 22.

f Isa. 2. 3

g Acts 11. 23.

h Ibid.

i *Acts* 11. 26.  
k *ib.* 14. 23

the inward heart-work, it was already done: Which they did accordingly, and became a Church by a visible Constitution, and professed Subjection to the Gospel of Christ, in all its holy Appointments, in which Church *Paul* and *Barnabas* Preached a whole Year<sup>i</sup>, and to which Elders were Ordained<sup>k</sup>.

§. 4. Hence such a People thus moved by the Grace of God, and having by mutual converse one with another in their Neighbourhood and Society in some holy Duties, speaking often solemnly and seriously among themselves of the things of God and their Souls<sup>a</sup>, discerning the Grace of God<sup>b</sup>, and love to the Lord Jesus Christ, his House and Members in each other, and finding good and sufficient matter to build with<sup>c</sup>, counting the cost of their professed undertaking<sup>d</sup>, in the fear of God<sup>e</sup>, strength of Christ, and assistance of the Spirit<sup>f</sup>, having frequently and solemnly waited upon God on this account together and apart<sup>g</sup>, as also advised with the neighbouring Churches of Christ and Elders thereof<sup>h</sup>, and finding their way made clear before them, by the footsteps of other Flocks of that Nature<sup>i</sup>, they proceed with their Faces *Zion-ward*<sup>k</sup>, to the most solemn attending this great matter,

a *Mal.* 3. 16.  
b *Act.* 11. 23.  
c 1 *Pet.* 2. 5.  
d *Luke* 14. 28.  
e *Acts* 9. 31  
f *Eph.* 3. 16  
g *Col.* 3. 17  
*Phil.* 4. 6.  
h *Prov.* 11. 14. 1 *Thes.* 1. 6. 5. 2. 14  
i *Cant.* 1. 8  
k *Jer.* 50. 5

in

in framing a Gospel-Temple with Fasting and Prayer, and manage it in such a manner as becomes so sacred and weighty a business, without any thing of confusion <sup>1</sup>.

§. 5. And therefore, that it may be so performed, something of ordinary Christian-Prudence is necessary <sup>a</sup>, under Christ's General Rules, that all things should be done in and about Churches and God's Service without confusion <sup>b</sup>, and to edification <sup>c</sup>. For which reason, on a solemn Day, set apart for this end, they ought in Faith and dependance on him <sup>d</sup>, to depute one of their number, for that time at least, to go before the rest in the concerns of that Day, and preside in matters of Order <sup>e</sup>, which being done, all of them, and each person, he or she (by her self, if bashfulness hinder not, if it doth, by delivering in Writing what should be spoken) are to give an account of what God hath done for each, and of the hope they have, with meekness and reverence <sup>f</sup>, which when all have done, Two Questions are to be put by the said presiding person :

1. Whether they be all and every one fully satisfied with each others declared and professed grounds of Hope <sup>g</sup>, so far as to be willing cordially to receive one another in the

1 *1 Cor.* 14  
33, 40.

a *Prov.* 13.  
16.

b *1 Cor.* 14  
33.

c *ib.* v. 26

d *Heb.* 12.  
28.

*James* 1.6

e *1 Cor.*  
14. 40.

f *1 Pet.* 3.  
15.

g *Ps.* 112.  
2, 3, 4, 5.

the

g Ro. 15. 7. the Lord s? Which being answered in the Affirmative by Suffrage, (or word of Mouth, which is best in this Case :) The next Question ought to be,

2. Whether they all and every one do freely, solemnly and unanimously give up themselves and their Seed to the Lord<sup>h</sup> and join themselves to one another in Church-Fellowship<sup>i</sup>, promising subjection to Christ their Political Head, in the Faith and Order of the Gospel<sup>k</sup>, and to walk accordingly in discharge of their Duties to God and one another, as becometh Church-Members<sup>l</sup>, through the Grace of God helping and assisting, and accordingly give to each other the right hand of fellowship<sup>m</sup>?

Which Question answered in the Affirmative, the said deputed person, doth in the Name of the Lord Jesus declare them a Church of Christ. As likewise the Elders and Brethren of other Churches there present (as they ought to be, if they can be had, to behold their Faith and Order<sup>n</sup>) should also declare that they own and acknowledge them a Church of Christ, to their great satisfaction and rejoicing<sup>o</sup>. Then lastly, to continue the Work of the Day with some Word of Exhortation, and earnest Supplication, that God would be pleased to bless this Flock, and cause

g Ro. 15. 7.

h 16. 2.

h Ro. 12. 1

Matt. 19.

14, 15.

Acts 2. 39.

i ib. 41, 42

k 2 Cor. 9.

13.

l Col. 2. 5, 6

Phil. 1. 27.

m 2 Cor. 4

15.

n Col. 2. 5.

o 2 Thes. 1.

3, 4.

1 Thes. 2.

13, 14.



cause it to grow, as also, that God would give them a faithful Pastor <sup>p</sup>, with other Ministerial Officers, giving thanks to God for this so hopeful a beginning, and what he hath graciously done for them <sup>q</sup>.

<sup>p</sup> Jer. 3. 15  
Mat. 9. 38.

<sup>q</sup> Phil. 4. 6.

§. 6. A Church thus constituted is a true Church, and a Body of Christ; and tho' its not yet organized with Ministerial Officers, yet it wants nothing of the Essence of a Church of Christ <sup>a</sup>, for if a Church ceaseth not to be a Church when it hath lost all its Ministerial Officers, and reduced to this state, then this Church is an essential Church. Besides, a Church must be before a Pastor can be, because that Relation must arise out of the Church, and cannot arise from elsewhere, a Church being a Corporation by Charter from Christ; but yet though it be a true Church as to its Essence and Being, yet it is not compleat as to its well-being <sup>b</sup>, in that it is not furnished with all its Priviledges that Christ hath purchased and provided for it, having not due instruments for the administration of all Ordinances, or execution of the Power committed to it, in the most orderly and regular manner <sup>c</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 12  
27.  
Rev. 1. 20

<sup>b</sup> Titus 1. 5

§. 7. Hence the first subject of the Keys is a Church essential; for its impowered by Commission from

<sup>c</sup> Eph. 4.  
11, 12.

D

Christ

a *Act.* 14.  
23.

b *Act* 6.3.

c *1 Cor.* 5.7

a *Phil.* 2.  
2. 3.  
*Eph.* 4. 3.

Christ to choose its own Ministerial Officers <sup>a</sup>; and if they be one or more belonging to other Churches, or non-Members, they can receive them Members <sup>b</sup>. Likewise they can admit other Members that desire to join with them. Lastly, it hath power to admonish or reject any scandalous, or any offending Member, and that before such a Church hath Elders or Deacons <sup>c</sup>. These are plain from the nature of a Body Corporate.

§. 8. To conclude, If in the Gathering a Church any Person offering to join a Member, be on any account excepted against, his admission ought to be deferred for the present, and his Case to have a due hearing and consideration afterward, and not to interrupt the further Proceedings of that day <sup>a</sup>.

## CHAP. VI.

*Of the Extraordinary Ministers  
of the Churches.*

*Christ hath provided for the well-being of his Churches : Ministers for the Erection and Planting the First Churches : Gospel Constitution offered to the Jews first : Extraordinary Ministers who : And what their Call, Qualifications, Work : Apostles and Evangelists, how differing : The first Prophets and Teachers no Ruling Officers : Extraordinary Ministers continue not, but are ceased.*

§. 1. **T**HE Lord Jesus Christ the Great Shepherd <sup>a</sup>, the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession, faithful in his own House <sup>b</sup>, doth not only build it <sup>c</sup>, but furnish it with all Means of Grace conducing to visible and spiritual exercise of life and Godliness <sup>d</sup>; and having shewed the form of his House to any People taken out from and ashamed of the ways they walked in, in their former ignorance <sup>e</sup>, separated and set them apart to the Lord in a spiritual Building <sup>f</sup>, doth likewise shew them the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the Forms thereof, and all the Ordinances

a 1 Pet.

5. 4.

b Heb. 3.

1, 2.

c *ibid.* v. 3.

d 2 Pet. 1.

3.

e 1 Pet. 1.

14, 15.

f Eph. 2. 19

22.

g *Ezē.* 43.  
11, 12.

h *Eph.* 4.  
10, 11.  
i *Matt.* 28.  
20.

a *Hof.* 11.  
1, 3.  
b 1 *Cor.* 3.  
6, 9.

c *Mat.* 10. 2  
ch. 28. 20.  
*Act.* 1. 2, 3,  
13.  
d *Mar.* 16.  
17, 18.  
*Act.* 2. 4.  
e *Act.* 20.  
27.

f *Mat.* 28.  
19, 20.

ces thereof, and all the Laws thereof, and writes it in their sight, that they may keep the whole Form thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and do them, which is the Law of his House<sup>g</sup>, whereby he hath provided for the well-being of his Churches, in a fit and suitable Ministry and Ordinances, which he gave and dispensed, chiefly at his Exaltation<sup>h</sup>, and according to his Commission from his Father, hath commanded them diligently to observe<sup>i</sup>.

§. 2. And accordingly, at first he provided for his Churches such a Ministry as should be best fitted to the Infant-state of his first Churches after his Ascension<sup>a</sup>, both for the planting and watering of them<sup>b</sup>; therefore Nominates and Ordains the first Ministers (as is usual in the like case among Men) in his Charter by Name<sup>c</sup>, giving them more than ordinary Power, and qualifying them with more than ordinary Gifts and Graces of his Holy Spirit<sup>d</sup>, whereby they had light and authority<sup>e</sup> to teach and put in practice the whole Mind and Will of Christ in planting, governing and furnishing the Churches with their ordinary and appropriate Ministry, which was to be stated and standing in them to the end of the World<sup>f</sup>. §. 3.

§. 3. As the Gospel in its full Light, was first by Christ's Ordination to be offered to the *Jews* <sup>a</sup>, who (according to *Moses*) were bound to hear Christ, and prefer his Person and Ministry before that of *Moses* <sup>b</sup>: So the Lord Jesus Christ himself and Apostles, made the first offer of a Gospel-Constitution of Churches to them, and placed a Gospel and powerful Ministry in that First and Famous Church at *Jerusalem* <sup>d</sup>, which in its building, precious matter <sup>e</sup>, beautiful form, and most rich furniture, did so out-shine and darken all the Glory of their Worldly Sanctuary, and services appertaining thereto<sup>f</sup>, that the whole Church Establishment by the Ceremonial Law of *Moses*, (the Vail under which Gospel-Mysteries lay obscured <sup>g</sup>,) was manifestly removed and done away <sup>h</sup>, having not only bin first Nailed to the Cross of Christ <sup>i</sup>, but also by another Building <sup>k</sup>, and Ministration <sup>l</sup>, come in the room thereof, of much more spiritual Glory and Lustre eclipsed; insomuch that what *Moses* had made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth <sup>m</sup>. Hence the Church of the *Jews*, in regard of all its *Mosaical* Establishment in its Vailed State, and as to its appurtenances appropriate to *Abraham's* Natural Posterity

a *Matt.* 10.

5, 6.

*Act* 13. 4, 6

b *Deut.* 18.

15.

*Act* 7. 37.

c *Act* 3. 25,

26.

d 1 *Cor.* 12

28.

e *Is.* 54. 11

1 *Pet.* 2.

5, 6.

f *Heb.* 9.

1, &c.

g 2 *Cor.* 3.

14.

*ibid.* v.

13, 14.

i *Col.* 2. 14.

k *Heb.* 9.

11.

l *Heb.* 8. 6

m 2 *Cor.* 3

10, 11.

n *Heb.* 8. 13o *Gal.* 3. 17p *4. 26. 28*

30, 31.

a *1 Cor.* 12

28.

b *Eph.* 4.

10, 11.

c *Matt.* 10.

2, &amp;c.

d *Act* 1. 20e *Mat.* 10.

6.

f *Eph.* 2. 14g *Mat.* 28.

19.

h *Acts* 13.

46.

i *ch.* 1. 26.k *ch.* 14. 14l *Re.* 11. 13m *Acts* 13.2. *Gal.* 1. 12

Posterity in a National Church-Constitution, waxed old, decayed and vanished away <sup>n</sup>, and the substantial part of *Abraham's* Covenant, in respect of the true Grace and Government of the Promised Seed, appeared and remained glorious <sup>o</sup>.

§ 4. These Extraordinary Ministers, were Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets and Teachers, whom the Lord Jesus set in the first Gospel-Church at *Jerusalem* <sup>a</sup>, and gave them to his Churches for a general good, but firstly to that Church <sup>b</sup> where they first exercised their Ministry, Apostleship and Eldership. The Apostles (so called by Christ's first Mission) were Twelve <sup>c</sup>, (one of which fell from his Apostleship <sup>d</sup>) these were Ordained by Christ himself, and had a double Mission, one to the *Jews* only before Christ's death <sup>e</sup>, whereby the Partition-Wall was broken down <sup>f</sup>, and then to all Nations *Jews* and *Gentiles* <sup>g</sup>, with a particular charge to go to the *Jews* first <sup>h</sup>. Upon the Fall of *Judas*, *Matthias* was chosen by the Church, and a Divine Ordination by Lot <sup>i</sup>. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were additional Apostles <sup>k</sup>, and sent (especially *Paul*) Apostles to the *Gentiles* <sup>l</sup>. They had an extraordinary Ordination by Christ's immediate Call and Instigation of the Holy Ghost <sup>m</sup>.

They



They were all of them such as had bin Eye-Witnesses of the Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord <sup>n</sup>. *Paul* himself had seen Christ, <sup>n</sup> *Acts* 1. but was converted and called to Apostleship after his Ascension, therefore he saith, he was *born out of due time* <sup>o</sup>. They were divinely inspired, had a marvellous effusion of the Spirit upon them <sup>p</sup>, had the Gifts of Tongues, Healing, Interpretation and of miraculous Works <sup>q</sup>. They had more than ordinary Graces and Gifts, mightily furnished to the Work of the Ministry; and lastly, had the Care of all the Churches <sup>r</sup>.

§. 5. The Evangelists were inspired Ministers of Christ to his Churches <sup>a</sup>; Sub-Apostolick, Adjutant to the Apostles in their Work, and much at their direction <sup>b</sup>. Some were Apostolick Evangelists, as *Matthew* and *John*, two of them; Called Evangelists from their Evangelical Histories of Christ in their Gospels <sup>c</sup>. *Mark* and *Luke* were only Evangelists, none of the Twelve. *Philip*, *Timothy*, *Titus* were only Evangelists, ordained Apostolically <sup>d</sup>, and employed and sent by the Apostles to places where they had Preached, and to Churches already Planted, to Visit, Teach and Direct to the Election of Officers, and see a supply of what was wanting, or

<sup>n</sup> *Acts* 1.  
21, 22, 23.

<sup>o</sup> 1 *Cor.*  
15. 8, 9.  
<sup>p</sup> *Acts* 2. 12.

<sup>q</sup> *Mark* 16  
16, 17, 18.  
1 *Cor.* 12.  
28.  
<sup>r</sup> 2 *Cor.* 11  
28.

<sup>a</sup> 2 *Tim.* 3.  
16.  
*Acts* 8. 5.  
26. & 21. 8.  
<sup>b</sup> 1 *Tim.* 1.  
3. & 2. 15  
2 *ep.* 2. 2.  
*Tit.* 1. 5.

<sup>c</sup> *Matt.* 1. 1

<sup>d</sup> *Acts* 6. 2.  
2 *Tim.* 1. 6.  
*Titus* 1. 5.

prepare Matters for the Apostles coming.

§. 6. The Prophets and Teachers of the first stamp, seemed to have much of Inspiration by the Holy Ghost <sup>a</sup>, by the coming down thereof upon the Apostles and Brethren at Pentecost. It appears not that they had any Office or governing Power in the Church, nor much differing <sup>b</sup>: but being Brethren, full of the Holy Ghost, as the Deacons and *Barnabas* before set apart<sup>c</sup>, were employed by the Apostles, or moved in themselves, to Preach the Gospel where-ever they came, for Conversion of the dark, unbelieving World <sup>d</sup>. There were of later date Gifted Brethren by an ordinary Measure <sup>e</sup> of Grace and Gifts, some for Edification within the Church, and some for Propagation of the Gospel abroad, which may yet remain, the reason thereof remaining.

§. 7. These Extraordinary Ministers continue not in the Churches <sup>a</sup>, neither Apostles or Apostolick Men, to whom it was essential to be Ordained, or immediately sent by Christ, and the Holy Ghost, as also extraordinarily inspired and qualified. The Miraculous Gifts they were furnished with are ceased <sup>b</sup>. The Apostles were to be such as had seen the Lord on Earth <sup>c</sup>; of such there

a *Act* 2.

b *ib.* 13.1.

c *ib.* 6. 3.

& 11. 24.

d *ib.* 11.19

e 1 *Cor.* 14

4, 5, 37.

1 *The.* 5.20

a 1 *Cor.* 13

8.

b *Ibid.*

c *Acts* 1.

21,22.

there is none now: They were charged with the Care of all the Churches<sup>d</sup>, of such there is none now; one or more to whom Christ hath committed the Care of all the Churches, or of many indefinitely. Lastly, There's not the same Reason for such a Ministry now: The Doctrine of the Gospel having bin received in the Nations of the Earth, the Canon of the Scripture filled; Churches have bin planted and walked in by the Rules and Order of the Gospel. The Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles abundantly confirmed by divers Signs following<sup>e</sup>, and since by the Profession, Practice and Sufferings of multitudes of faithful Witnesses<sup>f</sup>.

d 2Cor. 11  
28.

e Heb. 2.  
3, 4.  
f Heb. 12.  
1.  
Rev. 12. 11

## CHAP. VII.

*Of the Ordinary Ministers of a Church.*

*Christ hath appointed a sufficient Ministry for the Churches, according to their inward and outward concerns: What an Elder is: What sorts: The Pastoral Charge what it contains: How discharged by one or more: A Teacher what: A Ruling Elder what: A Deacon what: A Church is fully Organiz'd with a Pastor and Deacon.*

§. 1. **C**H R I S T being Exalted to God's Right Hand, and sitting there an Apostle and High Priest of good things to come <sup>a</sup>, hath made provision for the calling in of the Elect <sup>b</sup>, and his redeemed ones <sup>c</sup>, building and furnishing his spiritual Temples and Habitations for God by the Spirit <sup>d</sup>, not only by and under the Apostles Ministry, but also by a sufficiency of Ministry and Ordinances in an ordinary and standing way and manner of Dispensation to the end of the World <sup>e</sup>.

§. 2. According to the great Concerns of a visible Church in this World, Christ hath wisely consulted the well-being of it <sup>a</sup>, in instituting

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 9.

11.

<sup>b</sup> Acts 13.

48.

<sup>c</sup> Rev. 5. 9.

<sup>d</sup> Ephes. 2.

20, 21.

<sup>e</sup> Matt. 28.

19, 20, 21.

<sup>a</sup> Eph. 3. 10

ting and appointing the Ministers thereof<sup>b</sup>. As to the higher internal concerns, he hath ordained Elders<sup>c</sup>; and as to the more external, (no Church being able to subsist and keep up Ordinances according to the instituted Nature of them, without a due care of those concerns) he hath ordained and appointed Deacons<sup>d</sup>.

b *Ephes.* 4.  
10, 11.  
c *Acts* 14.  
23.  
*Phil.* 1. 1.

d *Acts* 6.  
2, 3.  
*Phil.* 1. 1.

§. 3. An Elder is an ordinary Minister to the Church, chosen and ordained by it to a Charge with Rule and Government<sup>a</sup>, being a Person of Age or Gravity, judged to be duly qualified for it<sup>b</sup>. An Elder, Presbyter or Bishop, we may find to be taken in Scripture for one and the same thing<sup>c</sup>, in relation to a Church of Christ, and are mostly taken indifferently for any Ruling and Teaching Minister; as may be shewed by Classick Authors in Civil respects, and by Scripture Language. An Elder is an ordinary standing Minister in a Church. The Apostles were Elders<sup>d</sup>, and executed Elders places, both in Teaching and Ruling where-ever they came, but all Elders were not Apostles, nor could they exert *Apostolick Power*, Elders being Men of ordinary use in a Church of Christ, and must continue<sup>e</sup>. An Elder primarily signifies an old Man<sup>f</sup>, but applied to an Office

a *1 Tim.* 5.  
17.  
*Act.* 4. 23.  
b *1 Tim.* 3.  
1, 2, &c.

c *Acts* 20.  
17, 28.

d *1 Pet.* 5.  
1.

e *Acts* 14.  
23.  
*1 Th.* 2. 17.

g Exo. 12.  
21.

h Act 14.  
23.

Office of Eldership in Church or State, he is fitly called a *Presbyter* or *Alderman* in our Language, *i. e.* *Elderman*. Such there were in the Church and State of the *Jews*<sup>g</sup>, and are in the Churches under the Gospel<sup>h</sup>. A Bishop is an Overseer of a Charge, and may be without Rule: Among the *Grecians* an *Attick* Magistrate, Clark of the Market, or Commissary of an Army was called a Bishop; but the Scripture useth it for a Ministerial Charge, Teaching and Ruling, one or both, Ruling at least.

a. 1 Pet. 5.  
2, 3.

Eph. 4. 11.

Act. 20. 38

b. John 10

11, 16.

c. Mat. 26,

26, 31.

d. 1 Pet. 5. 4

e. John 13,

15.

f. Mat. 28,

20.

§. 4. The Elders of a Church, are Pastor, or Adjuvant in the Pastoral Charge under Christ. The Pastor is an Elder of a visible and particular Church, Chosen and Ordained to the Office of Feeding the Flock by the Word, Sacraments and Government<sup>a</sup>. The Office, Charge and business of a Pastor is as a Shepherd to his Flock, to Feed, Guide and Fold: So Christ is the great Pastor<sup>b</sup>, and the first to the Gospel-Church<sup>c</sup>. And as he is the Chief Pastor<sup>d</sup>, so is he the great President and Example to all the Pastors of particular Churches in all things wherein he is to be followed in the Exercise of their Pastoral relation<sup>e</sup>; as also the Guidance of his Spirit, and Direction of his Word<sup>f</sup>, with all



all his holy Institutions, are to be diligently observed, for to him it is that they must give account<sup>s</sup> of this their great Stewardship<sup>h</sup>.

g Heb. 13.  
17.  
h 1 Cor. 4.  
1, 2.

§. 5. The Ministerial Charge as to Administration of things of the most spiritual Nature in a Visible Church, is contained in the Pastoral Relation, and where God gives ability to perform it fully to the edification of the Church, *One* may perform it duly<sup>a</sup>. But in case of bodily infirmity, or greatness of the Congregation, if he is not able through the first to bear the whole Work of Teaching and Exhorting, or for the other reason, he is not able to go through the governing Work, Christ hath provided Helps and Assistance for him; a Teacher in his Teaching work, and a ruling Elder to aid and assist in Ruling<sup>b</sup>.

a 2 Cor. 12  
19.  
Eph. 4. 12.

§. 6. He that is called and ordained of Christ by the Church to concur with the Pastor in the Teaching Work, to the furthering the Churches Edification, is called a Teacher, and waits on that Service, helping also in Ruling with the Pastor<sup>a</sup>.

b 1 Tim. 5.  
17.

§. 7. He that is Called and Ordained of Christ by the Church to concur with the Pastor in diligently ruling, is required to wait on that Work especially, for the Edification

a Rom. 12.  
7. 1 Cor. 12  
28. 1 Tim.  
3. 1, 2.  
Eph. 4. 11,  
12. Tir. 1. 9.  
1 Pet. 4.  
10, 11.

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a 1 Tim. 3.

1.

Rom. 12. 8.

1 Tim. 5. 17

a Acts 6. 2.

§ 4. 35.

compar'd

with ch. 6.

Neb. 13. 13

b Rom. 16.

1. § 12. 8.

1 Tim. 5.

9, 10.

c 1 Cor. 4. 2

1 Tim. 3. 8,

9, 10.

1 Pet. 4. 10

fication of the Church, and is called a Ruling-Elder, and is Ordained in the same manner with a Teaching-Elder <sup>a</sup>.

§. 8. He that ministers to the external concern of the Church, serving Tables for the support of the Worship of God, and relief of the Poor, is a Deacon <sup>a</sup>: there may be one or more, as the concerns of the Church are, and there may be Women-helps, (in some Cases necessary) called Deaconesses <sup>b</sup>. The Deacon's Charge is the true and faithful disposal of the Churches Stock and Contributions, and to the Church they are accountable <sup>c</sup>.

§. 9. A Church which hath a Pastor and Deacon is fully Organized, the Church requiring no more to Edification: The Pastoral Office containing in it all the Teaching and Ruling Charge, and the Deacons all that concern the Care of the Church as to Externals.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Of a Call to a Church Ministry.*

*How a Church is regularly furnisht by Call and Ordination: A Call immediate or mediate: What each is: How a Church comes to a Call: And how made: The consummation thereof no Ordination: A Person called being not a Member, ought to be joined to the Church calling him, before Ordination: None can or ought to be Ordained to the Catholick Visible Church.*

§. 1. **A** Church of Christ comes to be regularly furnished with a Ministry for its Edification, by a due Call<sup>a</sup> of such as are qualified thereto, and Ordination of them. A Church Calls, when after waiting upon God for Directions<sup>b</sup>, and coming to be acquainted with the Grace and Ministerial Gifts of a person or persons, which having tryed<sup>c</sup>, they are inclined to apprehend him or them suitable for them, the Church gives him or them a solemn invitation to a Ministerial Charge.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 5.4.

<sup>b</sup> Phil. 4.6  
Mat. 9.38.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Job 4.1  
1 Tim. 3.10

§. 2. A Call to a Ministerial Charge or Work, is either immediately by God himself in a more than

than usual way or manner <sup>a</sup>, or  
<sup>a</sup> *Gal. 1.1.* mediate by the Church of God;  
 12. and every one that undertakes such  
<sup>i</sup> *Tim. 1.1.* holy service must have one of these  
 two Calls, or else God sends him  
<sup>b</sup> *Rom. 10.* not <sup>b</sup>: The immediate Call is when  
 15. God doth qualifie and call a Person  
 to a Ministerial Service without the  
 instrumentality of Men or Churches;  
 and such was the Call of the Pro-  
 phets and Apostles, whose Call was  
 their Ordination and Infallible.

§. 3. A Mediate Call is that  
 which Christ makes by the instru-  
 mentality of a Church walking after  
<sup>a</sup> *1 Pet. 5.2* Christ's commands <sup>a</sup>, but is not in-  
<sup>2</sup> *John 6.* fallible, but eventually may not an-  
 swer the Churches end in Calling,  
 because the Person called may not be  
 suitable, or for some reasons may re-  
 fuse to submit thereto. Hence God  
 answers a Churches Call, by sending  
 to them a Person fit and willing,  
 whereby it most times proves happy  
 and successful<sup>b</sup>.

§. 4. The Church having wisely  
 and duly debated the whole matter,  
 with all secrecy, and keeping things  
 within the Church, and asked counsel  
 of God and Neighbour Churches (so  
 far as may be needful) and come to  
 some result among themselves, *all*, if  
 possible agreeing without strife and  
 murmuring <sup>a</sup>, or at least if any not  
<sup>a</sup> *Phil. 2.* so well satisfied, do consent to ac-  
 3, 8. quiesce  
<sup>i</sup> *Pet. 3.8.*

quiesce in the mind of the Church, the Call is agreed upon; but by such only who are actual Members, not by Members of other Churches, that communicate upon recommendation only.

§. 5. The consummation of the said Call is made by the free acceptance of the Person called <sup>a</sup>; but such Call and Acceptance (though necessary as Preliminaries) do not constitute a Person in a Ministerial Office, any more than a private Contract doth constitute Man and Wife, but Marriage by a Publick Covenant before sufficient Witnesses: So that the Person Called, is not constituted in Office without Ordination, which is a Publick and solemn setting him apart.

<sup>a</sup> 1Pet. 5.2

§. 6. If the Person called be not a Member, where he is to take his Church-Charge, he ought now, upon the said Call and Acceptance, to join as an actual Member to the Church <sup>a</sup>: For to constitute a non-Member in Office is contrary to all the Rules of any Corporate Society.

<sup>a</sup> Act. 6.3.  
1Cor. 5.12

§. 7. A Person may not be Ordained a Pastor or Church-Officer at large, or before he be called to a particular Congregation: For *relates* and *cor-relates* are co-essential to each other, and have reciprocal relative

tive affections : Ordination also is a solemn recognition of a Contract before made, which is done in the Call : Moreover, to make a Pastor before a People call him, is to make a Pastor to no body ; and to Ordain a Pastor upon supposal some People will choose him, makes him not only precarious, but null *ipso facto* ; for being Ordained upon a supposed futurity, makes his present Ordination void, not being a capable subject till called to a Relation. And if it be said, *Such an one is Ordained Pastor to the Catholick visible Church.* Then 1. Why did not that Church call him ? 2. Why may not Deacons be Ordained to the Catholick visible Church ? 3. If he be Ordained Pastor to the Catholick, how can he be Pastor to a particular Church ? unless he become a general and particular Pastor, a double Pastor ; which is absurd. 4. What power have a few Pastors or Churches to Ordain any Man to be Pastor to the Catholick Church ? as much power as an incorporated People, or the Mayors of several Corporations meeting together, have to appoint a common Mayor to all Corporations, or to make one another so.



## CHAP. IX.

*Of Ordination.*

*Of the meaning of the Word : How our Translators use the Word : Whether the Imposition of Hands be peculiar to Church Ministers : Whether Teaching Elders only can Ordain : Laying on of Hands, of Antiquity ; and of what uses : Divers Opinions about it : Arguments Answered, 1, 2, 3, 4. Concluded that it's an obsolete Rite, and Nine Arguments for it : How Ordination ought to be performed : How a Deacon's : Ordination may be repeated : The Ordination of a meer Preaching Minister to Conversion.*

§. 1. **O**rdination is an *English* Word (almost *Latine*, and coming of it) by which our Translators render Words in both Originals of very divers significations : But their use of the Word may be reduced for the most part, to these two General significations. 1. To the sense of pre-ordination of things, or persons ; and so Ordination is destination. 2. It's taken for an actual constitution of a thing or person, in a state or relation that either is designed unto. 1. By enacting

a *Isa.* 30.

33.

*Act.* 13. 38.

*Eccl.* 10. 42.

*Ephes.* 2. 10

1 *Pet.* 1. 20

*Fer.* 1. 5.

b 1 *Cor.* 7.

17. *Act.* 16

14. *Pf.* 81.

5. 1 *Chro.*

9. 22.

*Gal.* 3. 19.

c *Mar.* 3.

14. *Act.* 1.

22. 2 *Chr.*

11. 15.

2 *King*

23. 5.

*Titus* 1. 5.

*Heb.* 5. 1.

*Eccl.* 8. 3.

a *Act.* 14.

23.

ding <sup>a</sup> Laws for this or that thing, or person, which is called an Ordinance <sup>b</sup>, and is a Conjugate to Ordination, because ordained; or 2. By constituting, instating or enstalling a Person in a Charge or Office <sup>c</sup>, which is most properly Ordination in that sence, as we are here concern'd in it; being the publick and solemn enstating or installing a person in an Office or Charge committed to him, to which he was duly before called, and which he hath accepted.

§. 2. But when Ordination (according to its usage in the Old or New Testament) is applied unto *Men*, it signifies only the instating any one actually in a Place or Charge that he is designed or called to. Again, in all the places, where our Translators make such use of the Word, there is not the least mention of Imposition of Hands, tho the Word rendred *ordaining* <sup>a</sup>, signifies the lifting up of hands by way of Suffrage in Election of Officers.

§. 3. It's thought generally, that Imposition of Hands is only an honourary and peculiar Ceremony to the Ordination of Teaching Elders, and sacred to them alone: But if the said Imposition be a thing essential to Ordination as such, it must belong to all Church-Ministers ordained,

dained; as to Ruling Elders and Deacons: because likewise the greatest Plea that can be made for laying on of Hands on ordinary Church-Ministers must be taken from the Ordination of Deacons <sup>a</sup>, whereas indeed, we have not one instance of laying on of Hands on ordinary Teaching Elders in the whole New Testament, tho we read of the ordaining them <sup>b</sup>.

a *Acts* 6.

b *Act* 14.  
23.

§. 4. Again, it's an Error commonly received, that Ordination (performed by that supposed sacred Rite) is only to be administred by *Teaching* Elders, whether of the same Church, or of other Churches, and is an authoritative act of *such*. But this must needs be a great mistake upon all accounts; for the Elders of one Church cannot perform an Authoritative Act in another, it being a great Usurpation <sup>a</sup>; and the Elders of one Church having no power to Vote in another, which the meanest Brother hath, therefore how little power hath a foreign Elder to ordain or lay on hands in the said Church. If it appertain to Elders only, sure to the Elders of that Church in which the Ordination is, and to those to whom Authoritative Acts do belong, and not to the Elders of another Church and Corporation, any more than the

a 1 *Pet.* 4.  
15.

en-

enstalling the Mayor of one Corporation appertains to an Authoritative Act of the Mayor of another. But it may be truly said, *That Ordination of Elders is oftner in Churches that have no Elders at all, than in such that want one, and that have others surviving; Who then must Ordain a Pastor called to a Pastoral Charge, and lay Hands upon him?* Ans. Who should do it but the Church that called him<sup>b</sup>? Who should put him into his Charge but Christ by them? for it's Christ invests any person with a Church Ministerial Office by the Church where he hath placed his Name<sup>c</sup>, which is his Presence and Authority. He is the servant of Christ to his Church, and is its Propriety, and therefore, as called, so to be Elected and Installed by it. Obj. *But may the Church, having no Elders, lay Hands on him?* Ans. Either the Church must do it, or it must not be done at all; and if it be necessary to be done, the Church must do it, being an Authoritative Act: Foreign Ministers have no power to do it: (it's so in Civil Corporations, every Jurisdiction is distinct in it self:) The power is in the Church to lay on Hands (if allow'd as necessary) by some Brethren delegated and appointed thereto, and it stands with the greatest reason, that they that

b *Acts* 14.  
23.

c *Deu.* 14.  
23. & 16.  
6. 11.

that have a lawful right to Call and Choose, have the true Right of ordaining, and not they who have no power to Choose or Call. Besides, while laying on of Hands was in use, (extraordinary Gifts being indifferently bestowed, as God pleased) it was performed indifferently by God's Appointment, as *Ananias* an eminent old Christian <sup>d</sup>, was sent to lay Hands on *Saul*; and likewise, the Prophets and Teachers in the Church that was at *Antioch* (it appears not that they were Elders there) were appointed by God to lay Hands on *Paul* and *Barnabas*, tho at another time *Philip* an Evangelist could not lay Hands on them that were converted by his Ministry, confirm'd by his Miracles, and baptiz'd by him; but he having not power to convey the Gifts of the Holy Ghost by laying on of Hands, *Peter* and *John* came to *Samaria* for that end and purpose <sup>e</sup>: Whence it appears, (*Philip* being an Evangelist, and an extraordinary Minister, having not the power of bestowing the Gifts of the Holy Ghost (tho he had them, and wrought Miracles) and therefore did not lay on Hands, tho he baptized) that this Ceremony was used according to the Dispensation (as God pleased) of the Gift of bestowing the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, neither

d *Acts* 9.  
14, 17.

e *Acts* 8.  
15, 16, 17.

f 1 Cor. 12.  
7. to 11.

ther confined by any Institution to Elders or Brethren; and therefore one or other laid on Hands, as this Gift was by God bestowed<sup>f</sup>. And therefore it need not be any objection, *That they that Ordain others by laying on of Hands must be in the same Office, and superiour to the person ordained, and hence Brethren cannot ordain a Pastor.* For we Reply, That the Church is supream to any or all the Ministers thereof, they being but ministring Servants thereto; that (supposing laying on of Hands be Ordination) the delegated Brethren that administer the Rite, do it in the Name of Christ, and representing the Church, it's needless the Persons applying should be in office themselves, superiour as the Apostles, or equal as ordinary Elders, it's enough, that they are impower'd by Christ and his Church to this service at this time. But the whole reason of this practice being ceased, the Rite it self is also ceased, as above-said, for no extraordinary, nor ordinary Gifts are now conveyed by laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, or of Brethren, neither is the Person so enstalled, any better qualified for his place, either made honester or abler by a spirit of Government, or any more furnisht with Gifts and Graces, any more than a secular



secular Magistrate (Mayor or others) is by the Ceremonies of his Instalment.

§. 5. This Ceremony of laying on of Hands was of great Antiquity, and variously applied, for quite contrary ends, according to the Case it was conjoined with by Divine Command or Humane Usage. It was used in Prophetick Blessings <sup>a</sup>, and it was used in solemn Exsecrations <sup>b</sup>, and execution of high Criminals, in charging Sin on the Sacrifice <sup>c</sup>, in constituting Representatives of the People, and then the People laid hands <sup>d</sup>. After the coming of Christ, Christ used it variously, he laid his Hands on the Head in Blessing: Both Christ and his Apostles laid on Hands in Healing <sup>e</sup>, and used it indifferently, that or *Unction*, as equivalent Rites <sup>f</sup>. It is also used both in the Old and New Testament <sup>g</sup>, as significant of the Conveyance of great and extraordinary Gifts to persons that God would qualifie to great Service, tho not in relation to any Office in the Church <sup>h</sup>, or at the enstalling eminent Leaders in Office to his People, shewing God's furnishing them with extraordinary qualifications of Grace, or Government at least, and often both <sup>i</sup>; Neither was this Rite, or that of *Unction* inseparably annex'd to any of these ends or uses under

a Gen. 48.

14.

b Lev. 24.

14.

c Ib. 4. 15.

8 6. 21.

d Numb. 8.

12.

e Mat. 19.

10. 11.

f Mar. 6. 5.

ch. 16. 18.

Luk. 13. 13

Acts 28. 8.

g Isa. 5. 14

h Num. 27

23.

i Tim. 4.

14.

i Acts 8. 18

k Acts 6. 6.

8 13. 2, 3.

1 *Act* 1.23  
26.  
*Matt.* 10.5  
*Joh.* 20.22  
m *Acts* 2.  
1, &c.

n 1 *Tim.* 4.  
14.

the Old or New Testament. Extraordinary Church-Officers were Ordained without them by Election<sup>l</sup>, and Extraordinary Gifts were conveyed, and Miracles wrought, both by Christ and his Apostles, without the use of either<sup>m</sup>, though we find not that this Ceremony was used in the New Testament by the Apostles, or the next followers of them, but upon the account of furnishing the subject on whom Hands were laid with extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost<sup>n</sup>.

§. 6. It is pleaded for the continuance of this Rite in Churches (by some very irrationally) that its essential to Ordination of Gospel-Ministers: By others, not as Essential, so as the not having it makes it null, but as necessary to the Authority and Honour of the Ministry: Others look upon it as indifferent, doing neither good nor harm, and that Ordination is never the worse if it hath it not, nor never the better if it hath it, but it is only harmlessly annexed. Lastly, There are others think that it is *obsolete*, like the brazen Serpent in *Hezekiah's* days, that had no healing vertue in it, a meer piece of Brass: Such a thing now do many truly take *Imposition of Hands* to be. We shall insist upon the proof of this last especially, which being

being done, all the other will fall of their own accord, or by necessary consequence.

§. 7. The Arguments used for the continuance of the use of the Rite of *Imposition of Hands* in the Churches, are 1. *The laying Hands on the Deacons by the Apostles.* Ans. All acts of the Apostles were not Presidential to others. The Apostles laid their Hands on the Deacons, not so much as such, but as Persons to be furnished with an Extraordinary Spirit, as appeared afterward by two especially that were called forth to most Eminent Service for Christ, one, viz. *Stephen*, to set his Seal to the Truth of Christ by his Bloud, in giving one of the most Eminent Testimonies thereto, living and dying, and the first after Christ's Ascension<sup>a</sup>. The other, *Philip*, was an Eminent Evangelist, who Planted the Gospel and Churches in *Samaria*, was brought miraculously to the Eunuch, and Preached Christ unto him, who although he was searching the Scriptures, yet knew not that the Messiah was come till *Philip* opened the Prophet *Isaias* to him<sup>b</sup>. They that insist on this Plea, ought to be as zealous for the formal *Ordination* of Deacons by laying on of Hands, as for the laying on of Hands on ordinary Pastors, and more; there

a Acts 7.

b Acts 8.

being a seeming President for the first, but none for the second.

a 1 Tim. 4. 14. §. 8. It's alledged, *The Presbytery laid their Hands on Timothy*<sup>a</sup>, and they say, *The Presbytery was a Classis, or at least a Consistory of ordinary Elders.* Ans. 1. That Inference wants proof, for that they were not *all* so is beyond Question.; for the Apostle Paul was among them for one, or else Timothy had Hands laid on him twice<sup>b</sup>. 2. The Apostles were Presbyters, and call themselves so<sup>c</sup>, and why might it not be a Presbytery of Apostles and Evangelists, seeing such are mentioned by Name, and it belonged to them, and not to ordinary Pastors to bestow the Gifts of the Holy Ghost by laying on of Hands? And 3. It appears that Timothy received such a Gift by the laying on of Hands<sup>d</sup>. 4. He was not made an ordinary Pastor, but an Evangelist, the Ordination of whom we find was by the Apostles. As Paul's Ordination was a separation to his Apostleship to the Gentiles<sup>e</sup>.

§. 9. It's alledged, *That Timothy is charged to lay Hands suddenly on no Man; which seems to be meant of Ordination of ordinary Pastors.*

Ans. If it be so meant, yet it proves not laying on of Hands by ordinary Pastors, for Timothy was not such. It is not to be doubted, but the Gift that

that *Timothy* received was such an extraordinary Gift as was bestowed then frequently by laying on of Hands, and which *Simon Magus* would have purchas'd of *Peter* for Money, *That on whomsoever he should lay his Hands they should receive the Holy Ghost*<sup>a</sup>. This Gift, or the Rite of Conveyance, the Apostles were wary of prostituting to Men of corrupt Minds: And therefore the Apostle warns *Timothy*, not to apply it rashly to any, for it's apparent the Apostles laid not their Hands on *Simon Magus*, finding he had no truth of heart; but rejected him, and laid not Hands upon him, though he had bin baptized.

a *Acts* 8.  
18, 19.

§. 10. *Heb.* 6. 2. is pleaded, *That Baptism and laying on of Hands were appointed as standing Ordinances in Churches.* Ans. This Text hath bin much mistaken and abused: But briefly, it's not to be understood as if *Baptism* it self, or *laying on of Hands* were to be understood to be the Principles there meant; for indeed, he speaks but of one Foundation<sup>a</sup>, *the Doctrine of Christ*, which is laid in Repentance and Faith, held forth in Baptism, and confirmed by the Apostolick Signs following Christ's Ascension<sup>b</sup>, in those extraordinary Gifts conveyed by *laying on of the Hands of the Apostles*, and Apostolick

a *1 Cor.* 3.  
11.

b *Heb.* 2. 3.  
4.  
*Mark* 16.  
16.

lick Men : Hence *Beza* saith, he found in one Copy, *That Baptism and Laying on of Hands were enclosed by a Parenthesis* : But if it be not so it matters not much, for it is the Doctrine of *Baptism* and *laying on of Hands* which are here spoken of, viz. The Foundation-Doctrine of Christ, symbolically exhibited by the one, and miraculously, beyond all doubt, confirmed by the other in Apostolick times.

§. 11. We conclude concerning this high applauded Ceremony which the *Papists* make Sacramental, and say it leaves an indelible Character, and some *Protestants* adore little less, That we find upon the best Enquiry, and strictest Scrutiny, *That it is no continued Ordinance or Institution of Christ in his Churches, And, That its an obsolete and ceased Ceremony,* for these Heads of Reasons only, for brevity sake following :

1. Because the End and Significance of this Rite is ceased, therefore the Rite it self ; for a Rite that signifies nothing, is an empty Sign and vain, and we ought not to do any thing in the Worship of God that is empty, insignificant vain <sup>a</sup>, and the doing whereof is Will-Worship.

2. That Ceremony that none can by a due Authority apply, cannot be performed ; but none such are now,

<sup>a</sup> Col. 2.8.

Matt. 15.9

Col. 3. 20.



now, or can pretend thereto, there being no *Apostles* or *Apostolick Men*, or such as can pretend to extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost; much less to a Power or Commission to bestow them on others by any Solemn Duty whatever; much less, by a Ceremony: Therefore such a Practice as is a Pretence before Men, to that which we dare not profess plainly to in Words before God, is but a mocking of God and Man<sup>b</sup>.

3. We have shewed that the Ceremony was never appropriate to the *Ordaining* of any Ministers; for it was a common Ceremony used in other Cases, and to other Persons: To the sick<sup>c</sup>, to new Converts<sup>d</sup>, to those that were Members, and had Grace, but it was none of those Gifts that were for Propagation and Confirmation of the Doctrine of Christ<sup>e</sup>. Many, yea most of the Apostles were *Ordained* without it<sup>f</sup>. No *Ordinary Pastor Ordained* with it, as we read of<sup>g</sup>: Where it was used, the Appliers of it were such as were inspired, or had immediate Command from God for doing it; and there were many that never had *imposition of Hands* themselves<sup>h</sup>,

4. *Ordination* is no where called *Laying on of Hands*, nor *Laying on of Hands, Ordination*, in the Old or New Testament.

b *Gal.* 6.7.  
2 *Cor.* 11.  
13.

c *Mar.* 16.  
18.  
d *Act* 8.17

e *ib.* 13.3.

f *Mat.* 10.  
7, 8.  
g *Act* 28. 19.  
24.  
23.

h *Act* 8.  
14, 17.

i Acts 6.6. 5. There is the same Reason for the *Ordaining* Ruling Elders and Deacons by *Imposition of Hands*, greater for the latter<sup>i</sup>, and will the Assertors of this Rite allow it to them? No, they appropriate it to Teaching Elders only.

k ib. 14.23 6. Our Translators do honestly own, that the Churches Solemn and Publick Election of Elders by Suffrage, is Ordination<sup>k</sup>.

l Joh. 13.5  
m James 5. 14. 7. There is no more ground for continuance of this Rite, nor so much, as for that of *washing feet*<sup>l</sup>, or *laying on of hands*, or *anointing the sick*<sup>m</sup>, but since the cessation of Miraculous Gifts, the *anointing of the sick*, and *Imposition of Hands*, in all Cases, as a Rite, is ceased: That of *washing feet* was only teaching to Christ's Disciples the duty of Humility and Self-Denial, which they were after to follow him in as Ministers, not in the use of the Ceremony it self<sup>n</sup>; and there are but two Instituted Rites perpetuated to the Churches to the end of the World, *Baptism*<sup>o</sup> and the *Lord's Supper*<sup>p</sup>.

n Joh. 13. 13, 14, 15, 16.  
o Mat. 28. 19.  
p I Cor. 11 26.

q Heb. 7.7  
Mat. 23. 11  
Mar. 9. 34.  
Luke 22. 24, 26. 8. If it be used only to denote the Blessing of the Party Ordained, then *Imposition of Hands* is a great Usurpation, and makes the Elders of one Church superiour to them of another, for the lesser is blessed of the greater, which Superiority Christ never allowed<sup>q</sup>. If

If it be said, *It's used to point out the Person ordained*; it's childish and frivolous, as if a Man could not be seen or known that comes upon so weighty and Publick an Undertaking, but they must point at him, and tell the People who he is; as if the Churches Election, and his publick Acceptance were not enough to shew the Man.

9. This Ceremony hath bin abominably abused by *Papists* to Superstition and Idolatry, and greatly idoliz'd by *Protestants*<sup>r</sup>, and always a *Bone of Contention* even in the more Reformed Churches<sup>r</sup>; a great offence and *Stumbling-Block* to many: Therefore it is of great Concern to the Churches for the promoting Peace and Truth, to throw it out altogether, having no Ground or Warrant for the continuance of it.

§. 12. It will be then enquired, In what manner a Church should Ordain its own Ministers: The Way is plain and easie, if Men make it not hard, knowing, *That Ordination of any one to an Office, is no more than the Publick and Solemn Recognition of the Call, with his like Declaration of his Acceptance, whereby he is enstated in, and enters upon his Function and Charge.* Therefore this Solemnization ought to be before competent Witnesses, *i. e.* Churches

r 2 Kings  
18. 4.  
1 Tim. 5.  
6.  
Titus 3.9.

a 1 Cor. 14

40.

b Acts 14.

23.

c Phil. 4. 6.

Eph. 6. 18.

d Ibid.

1 Tim. 2. 12

e 1 Pet. 5.

2. 3.

by themselves, or Pastors and Messengers, and ought thus to be performed decently to the Honour of Christ<sup>a</sup>, on a Day of Solemn Prayer set a-part for this End by the Church<sup>b</sup>, the neighbouring Churches acquainted therewith, and their Presence desired beforehand on the said appointed Day; Either a Ruling Elder, or other (if there be any) or a Delegated Brother, after first Application unto God by Prayer<sup>c</sup>, puts this Question unto the Church, *Whether they do freely choose A. B. to be their Pastor, Teacher, Ruling Elder* (as the Relation is to be, the Ordination of all being alike) *to be such an one to them; And whether they submit to him in the Lord?* To which Answer being made in the Affirmative, the Brethren only holding up their Hands<sup>d</sup>, The Elected Elder declares his Acceptance in all Gravity and Humility<sup>e</sup>, &c. So is the Day filled up with suitable Exhortations and Supplications, by the assistance of neighbouring Pastors, and the Ordination is finished, and the Pastor Ordained enters on his Office in the Conclusion of the Solemn Work of that Day.

§. 13. In the same manner a Deacon is ordained, differing only in some respects of Publick Solemnity, and that the words of the Question import

import him not to be a Governing Minister.

§. 14. A Church ought to have a due regard to the Person whom they Call and Ordain a Pastor, or Teaching-Elder, that he be a Man found in the Faith <sup>a</sup>, of good Report <sup>b</sup>, no Novice <sup>c</sup>, of Exemplary Grace and Piety <sup>d</sup>, and approved Abilities to Teach <sup>e</sup>, rightly divide the Word of God <sup>f</sup>, and defend the Truth <sup>g</sup>.

a 2 Tim. 1. 13.

b 1 Tim. 3. 2.

7. Tit. 1. 6.

c 1 Tim. 3. 6.

d ib. 4. 12.

1 Pet. 5. 3.

e 1 Tim. 3. 2.

f 2 Tim. 2.

15.

g Tit. 1. 9.

§. 15. The Conceit that *Ordination* may not be repeated is a *Popish* and vulgar Error: For as Churches are no more Prisons to Ministers than People, and there may be sufficient reason for the Pastor, Elder or Deacon to remove from one Church to another; in such a Case a Man is to be Ordained again; and so if he change to another Church afterward; for one Churches *Ordination* of a Man cannot make him Pastor to another.

§. 16. He that Preacheth to a People for Conversion, needs no other Ordination than the due Approbation and Mission of a Church of which he is a Member, accompanied with their Solemn Prayers for a Blessing on his Ministry.

## CHAP. X.

*Of Ordinances of General Communion.*

*Of the reason of the Word Ordinance: Christ's Offices shine forth in Ordinances: The Church obliged to wait on Christ in them: Ordinances General or Special: Which General: Publick Preaching what: Publick Prayers what: Praises of the Church, and singing Psalms: Contribution: Observation of the Lord's Day: Of Church Fasts.*

§. 1. **H**A V I N G shewed what Christ's Ordination of Persons is, we come to shew what Christ's Ordination of things is; and it is, *His Enacting divers Ordinances<sup>a</sup> and Appointments for the Order and Government of his own House<sup>b</sup>: Hence his positive Laws of this kind, are called Ordinances, because Ordained by him, or made by his Ordination<sup>c</sup>.*

§. 2. The Lord Jesus Christ exerts his Headship of our Profession, by his *Institution and Ordination* of such Ordinances wherein his Offices may eminently shine forth; in some, appearing as the Apostle of our Profession<sup>a</sup>; in others as High-Priest, *i. e. Melchisedech*, a Kingly High-Priest.<sup>b</sup> In the Word Preached<sup>c</sup>; as our Apostolick Prophet<sup>d</sup>: In the

Seals

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor.

11. 2.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. 3. 6

<sup>c</sup> Acts 16.

4.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. 3. 1.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid.

<sup>c</sup> ch. 7. 16,

17.

<sup>c</sup> Eph. 2. 17

<sup>d</sup> Acts 3.

22.



*Of Ordinances of General Communion.* 85

Seals of the Covenant his *Priestly* Vertues and Excellencies are held forth <sup>e</sup>: In the Keyes of Rule and Government his *Kingly* Office shines forth <sup>f</sup>; And thus he is symbolically described in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks the Churches <sup>g</sup>.

§ 3. A Gospel Ordinance of Christ is some visible Means of Grace <sup>a</sup>, Ordained by Christ as Head of our Profession <sup>b</sup>, wherein a Church of Christ, and all the Members thereof, are obliged to wait on him, Socially or in Communion <sup>c</sup>, for his Presence and Blessing <sup>d</sup> in one place <sup>e</sup>.

§ 4. Christ hath appointed some Church Ordinances to be dispensed in a Publick and General way promiscuously, and some to be attended upon in a more peculiar way of Communion, being appropriated to the Churches only. The Ordinances that appertain to the General Publick Communion of the Church, as well as to the separate and retired, are, Preaching the Word <sup>a</sup>, Prayers <sup>b</sup>, Praises <sup>c</sup>, and Contributions <sup>d</sup>.

§ 5. The Publick Preaching of the Word of God is, the Reading <sup>a</sup>, Expounding <sup>b</sup>, rightly dividing the Word of God <sup>c</sup>, to all spiritual Ends and Uses <sup>d</sup>, in order to the Edification of Believers <sup>e</sup>, and Conversion

e 1 Cor. 11  
25, 26.  
A<sup>cts</sup> 2. 38.  
f Rev. 3. 7.  
Zac. 6. 13.  
g Rev. 1. 13  
14, &c.  
a A<sup>cts</sup> 20.  
32.  
Eph. 4. 7, 8  
Heb. 12. 28  
b He. 3. 1. 2  
c A<sup>cts</sup> 2. 42  
1 Cor. 10.  
16.  
Heb. 10.  
23, 25.  
d 2 Cor. 6.  
16.  
Rev. 1. 13.  
Ps. 132. 15  
e 1 Cor. 11  
20.  
& 14. 23.  
a A<sup>cts</sup> 11.  
26.  
b Eph. 6.  
18.  
c Heb. 13.  
15.  
d Gal. 6. 6.  
1 Tim. 6.  
18.  
Heb. 13. 16  
a Neh. 8. 8.  
Luke 4. 16.  
b Neh. 8. 8  
A<sup>cts</sup> 17. 3.  
& 28. 3.  
c 2 Tim. 2.  
15.  
d ib. 3. 15.  
e A<sup>cts</sup> 20.  
32.

f *Acts* 26.  
 18.  
 g *1 Tim.* 5.  
 17.  
 h *1 Pet.* 4.  
 11.  
 i *Cor.* 2. 4.  
 i *1 Cor.* 14.  
 23; 24, 30,  
 32.  
 a *Heb.* 12.  
 28.  
*Act.* 20. 36  
*Eph.* 6. 18.  
 b *1 Tim.* 2.  
 9.  
 c *Ro.* 15. 30  
 d *Heb.* 4.  
 15. 1 *Joh.*  
 5. 14.  
*Joh.* 14. 13  
 e *Pf.* 133. 3  
 f *Psa.* 32. 5.  
*Dan.* 9. 4.  
 g *Col.* 4. 2.  
*Phil.* 4. 6.  
 h *Psa.* 60. 5  
 11.  
 i *1 Tim.* 2.  
 1, 2.  
 k *1 Cor.*  
 14. 3, 26.  
*Act.* 13. 15  
 a *Phil.* 4. 6.  
 b *Mat.* 26.  
 30.  
*Pf.* 108. 3.

version of Unbelievers <sup>f</sup>. Which  
 Preaching ordinarily belongs to the  
 Teaching Elders <sup>g</sup>, tho occasionally  
 others may Exercise Gifts among  
 them; as the Elders of other Church-  
 es <sup>h</sup>, or Brethren when Called there-  
 to, who are able to speak to Edifi-  
 cation, Exhortation and Comfort,  
 with submission to the Judgment of  
 the Church: Which speaking is the  
 Prophefying which the Apostle speaks  
 of <sup>i</sup>.

§. 6. Publick Prayer is a Solemn  
 Ordinance of Christ <sup>a</sup>, of general  
 Concern <sup>b</sup>, wherein the Church doth  
 with one accord <sup>c</sup>, address to God  
 for all Grace in the Name of Christ <sup>d</sup>,  
 and for a special Blessing on every  
 Ordinance <sup>e</sup>, with Confession of Sin <sup>f</sup>,  
 Thanksgiving <sup>g</sup>, Deprecations <sup>h</sup>, and  
 Intercessions <sup>i</sup>, and here the Elders  
 for the most part, go before the  
 Church, as in Preaching <sup>i</sup>, unless on  
 occasion, an Elder of another Con-  
 gregation, or any other Brother be  
 desired to assist, of whose Graces  
 and Gifts the Congregation is will-  
 ing to taste <sup>k</sup>.

§. 7. The Praises of the Church  
 are conjoined with Supplications and  
 Confessions in publick Prayers <sup>a</sup>: But  
 singularly expressed in an Ordinance  
 appointed for that end and purpose,  
*viz. Singing of Psalms in the Church* <sup>b</sup>,  
 which Singing of Psalms, Hymns or  
 Spi-

Spiritual Songs <sup>c</sup> (indited by the Spirit of God in the Scriptures <sup>d</sup>) is Christ's Institution, and ought to be practised with one accord in and by a Church, to the Praise and Glory of God, and to the Edification and Instruction of the Church, and as the Case may require <sup>e</sup>; there being Psalms suitable to every Condition, some Didactical, some Penitential, &c. all tending to the Laud and Praise of God: but care must be had in suiting the *Psalm*, as to the Subject, Time, Occasion, or Congregation that is to join together in that Ordinance, mixt or not: Some do scruple Singing in a *mixt* Congregation, But it ought not to be scrupled:

1. Any more than the Churches Prayers, wherein also are Praises in such a Congregation.

2. The Church ought not to forbear the praising God in Prayer or Singing because of others that will join with them in Publick Worship<sup>f</sup>.

3. They that are not to be excluded from Hearing the Word, and praying for a Blessing upon it, ought not to be excluded from praising God for the Word of his Grace; but Unbelievers are such as ought not, &c. <sup>g</sup> for they may be converted by it for ought we know, if not, Why should any Man be hindred from

<sup>c</sup> Eph. 5. 19.  
Col. 2. 16.  
Rom. 15. 6.  
<sup>d</sup> 2 Chr. 29, 30.

<sup>e</sup> Isa. 12. 1  
& 42. 10.  
Psa. 95. 12.  
Acts 16. 25  
Isa. 5. 13.

<sup>f</sup> Ps. 108. 3

<sup>g</sup> Rom. 10. 17.  
1 Cor. 14. 25.  
Psa. 100. 3.  
& 136. 9.

from praising of God (which all Creatures do) in the Congregation.

4 Praying and Praising God are parts of Natural Worship<sup>n</sup>, though Espoused by Christ's Institution, and made a part of Church-Worship.

h Ps. 107.

21, 22.

Mat. 26. 30

5. All good Angels and Creatures join in Consort with the Church in praising God, yea and in giving Glory to the Lamb<sup>i</sup>.

i Rev. 5.

12, 13, 14.

6. The *Gentiles* and all People are called upon to Laud and Praise God, and to rejoice with his People<sup>k</sup>.

k Rom. 15.

9, 10, 11.

l Re. 1. 20.

m 1 Tim.

3. 15.

7. A Church is a Candlestick<sup>l</sup>, and a Pillar<sup>m</sup>, to hold forth unto the World matter of *Prayer* and *Praises*; therefore Men of the World are not to be excluded from the Congregation.

8. God's common Mercies and Wonders wrought daily, call for such Praises<sup>n</sup>.

n Ps. 92. 2.

o 148. 11,

12.

9. The Efficacy of the Gospel Converts the Unbeliever, and makes the *Stranger* joyful in the House of Prayer: And should *be* be hindred from expressing his joyfulness, by singing with the Congregation<sup>o</sup>?

o Isa. 56. 7.

o 24. 16.

o 35. 10.

§. 8. *Contribution* also is an Ordinance of Christ, founded in the Nature of a Visible Body Politick, and instituted by Christ, whereby not only the actual Members of a Church, but the Attenders on the Publick Means of Grace there dis-

pen-

pensed, are obliged, according to ability, to cast into *Christ's Treasury*<sup>a</sup> (on the *First day of the Week*, and on other Solemn Days <sup>b</sup>) for the Service of that Church in Maintenance of Ordinances <sup>c</sup>, and Relief of poor Saints <sup>d</sup>, and as far as may be, for the help and support of other Churches <sup>e</sup>. Which Collections are to be made by the Deacons <sup>f</sup>, and brought to the Church Treasury under their Care and Trust, and to be disposed of for the said Ends and Uses, as the Church shall direct, and to the Church they are to give their account, and approve themselves to be faithful <sup>g</sup>.

§. 9. It is not to be supposed that the Lord Jesus Christ would institute a Worship in his Churches, and not appropriate some *time* unto the Publick, and Solemn Celebration thereof. Therefore we hold, That he hath appointed a Weekly Day to this End and Purpose; the seventh part of time being set apart by God himself in the beginning, and it could be no other than the Seventh Day at first, but afterward might be another. Likewise we hold, that the observation of the Seventh Day is *Jewish*; for it was to them a *shadow of things to come*<sup>a</sup>, and the very reason of Institution to the Church of *Israel* alledged by *Moses*

a *Gal. 6.6.*1 *Tim. 6.*

18.

Mar. 12. 43

b 1 *Cor. 16*

1, 2.

c 1 *Cor. 9.9*1 *Tim. 5.*

18.

d *Rom. 15.*

25, 27.

e *Ibid.*2 *Cor. 8.*

1, 2.

f *Acts 6.6.*g *Rom. 12.*

8.

1 *Cor. 4.2.*a *Col. 2.*

16, 17.

- b Deut. 5. 15.** *Moses* shews the same <sup>b</sup>; yea the very enjoyed *manner* of Observation in forbearance of all necessary labour by Man and Beast <sup>c</sup>. And none can assert, That God requires such an Observation under the New Testament. And lastly, Tho God gives a reason from Creation Rest <sup>d</sup>, yet Gods first hallowing it was before the Fall; and we find not that it was observed by any of the Patriarchs before the Children of *Israel* came into the Wilderness: Therefore, as the first Institution was upon account of Creation <sup>e</sup>, so the next was upon the account of Redemption <sup>f</sup>. Accordingly, the Seventh Day was again instituted from their coming out of *Egypt*, a Type of Christ's Redemption <sup>h</sup>; We observe it in Remembrance of a true Redemption wrought for us <sup>i</sup>, by a Victory over Hell and Death in his Resurrection the third day, which was the First Day of the Week <sup>k</sup>, he lying in the Grave the whole Seventh Day, burying it with the whole *Mosaic* Oeconomy, the only Day wherein God could have no acceptable Worship in the World, the Vail of the Temple Rent, and Christ in the Grave <sup>l</sup>. The Reasons for Observation of the First Day of the Week (not as a Sabbath<sup>m</sup>) but the Lord's Day, are, 1. Then Christ finished Redemption, and Rose from the
- c Exod. 20.**  
**d Heb. 4. 4, 5.**  
**e Gen. 2. 3.**  
**f Deu. 5. 15**  
**g Ex. 20. 1**  
**h Lu. 1. 68.**  
**i 1 Pet. 1. 18.**  
**k 1 Cor. 15 3, 4.**  
**l The. 4. 14**  
**Eph. 1. 19, 20.**  
**1 Mat. 27. 51.**  
**Job 3, 5, 6.**  
**m Col. 2. 16, 17.**



the Dead <sup>n</sup>. 2. Then he appeared after his Resurrection to his Disciples assembled <sup>o</sup>. 3. On this Day the Churches held their Solemn Assemblies for Preaching and administering the Lords Supper, and Contributions <sup>p</sup>. 4. On this Day *John* was in the Spirit, and it's called the *Lord's Day* <sup>q</sup>, because more peculiarly appropriated to his Service, as the Lord's Supper.

§. 10. It is not in the Power of Churches to set apart any stated times Yearly or Monthly to be observed; for that would be Superstition and Will-Worship <sup>a</sup>: But, Days of Fasting and Humiliation may be appointed by any Church of Christ, according as weighty Reasons lead it thereunto <sup>b</sup>.

n *Mat.* 28.

i.

*Luke* 24.1.

o *Joh.* 20.

19.

p *Acts* 20.

7.

i *Cor.* 16.

12.

q *Re.* 1.10.

a *Gal.* 4.10

*Col.* 16.17.

b *Acts* 14.

23.

## CHAP. XI.

*Of Ordinances of Special Communion.*

*Kinds of Ordinances of Special Communion : A Seal what it doth ; and signifies : New Testament Seals but Two : What Baptism is : What the Lord's Supper is : What is to be observed in its Administration.*

§. 1. **H**AVING shewed what are Christ's Ordinances in a Visible Church of General or more common Communion ; we come in the next place to speak of *Ordinances of Special Communion*, peculiar only to such as are Church-Members ; and these are such Appointments of Christ as concern the Administration of the Seals, or such as concern the Administration of the Keys.

§. 2. A Seal of the Covenant under the New Testament is a visible and sensible Ratification thereof, wherein Christ our High Priest doth eminently shew forth unto us the glory of his Priestly Office, in making himself a Sacrifice for Sin, bearing the Charge and Curse of Sin, satisfying God's Justice, reconciling us to God, and procuring Eternal

nal Salvation to us <sup>a</sup>, who as such is the great Condition of the Covenant of Grace <sup>b</sup>, i. e. of Abraham's Covenant <sup>c</sup>, whereby we have upon Profession, right to claim all Church-Priviledges Mystical and Visible, in the State of Grace, and that of Glory hereafter <sup>d</sup>. In all the Old Testament Seals, and in the *New* especially, Christ in the Covenant of Grace is in a most lively manner represented, and shewed forth in the Church <sup>e</sup>, as to Condition and Promises; he being not only the great Condition, but the *Yea* and *Amen* of all the Promises <sup>f</sup>, which are therein Applied and Sealed at least Ministerially <sup>g</sup>.

§. 3. The Seals of the New Testament are Two and no more, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, which are the only Instituted Rites or Ceremonies in a Church that are ordained by Christ to continue till he come <sup>a</sup>. All *Jewish* Ceremonies are vanished as Shadows and abolished <sup>b</sup>, as all Ceremonies attending the bestowing Miraculous Gifts are also ceased <sup>c</sup>, such as *Imposition of Hands* on well or sick, *Unction*, *washing of Feet*, this being but a didactical Ceremony used by Christ to teach the Apostles Humility, and not to Lord it over his Churches, and was never intended for a standing Ordinance.

And

a 1 Pet. 2.  
9.  
Heb. 9. 26.  
Col. 1. 21,  
22.  
Heb. 9. 12.  
b Isa. 42. 6.  
c Ro. 4. 13.  
Gal. 3. 17.  
d Gal. 3. 9.  
28, 29.

e 1 Cor. 11  
24, 25, 26.  
Col. 2. 11,  
12.  
f 2 Cor. 1.  
20.  
g Gen. 17.  
7, 10. .  
Rom. 4. 11  
12.  
Gal. 3. 27.

a Matt. 28.  
19, 20.  
1 Cor. 11.  
23, &c.  
b Heb. 8.  
5. 13.  
2 Cor. 3.  
14.  
c 1 Cor. 13.  
8.

And as none of these (which many are fond of, and even Idolize, some one, and some another, and upon as good Grounds all, as any for each one) had any Sanction for continuance, so their significancy ceasing, the Sign also comes to nought.

§. 4. *Baptism* is a Sign and Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, wherein Washing with Water into the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost <sup>a</sup>, doth represent and shew forth, at least Ministerially, a Sinners washing from his Sins in the Blood of Christ <sup>b</sup>, his New Birth and Renovation by the Spirit of Christ <sup>c</sup>, and his Covenant Obligation to be the Lords <sup>d</sup>. The Subjects of this Seal are all those who by Profession of Faith in Christ <sup>e</sup>, which is *Abraham's* Faith, are become Covenant-Members accordingly of a Visible Church, and their immediate Infant-Seed <sup>f</sup>; they being blessed with faithful *Abraham* <sup>g</sup>, and having all essential Church-Blessings come upon them: And therefore the Blessing of Membership to the professing Body of Christ <sup>h</sup>, and Gospel Church Priviledges, as they belong to one or other respectively, are Ministerially to be applied; of which *Baptism* is none of the least, being the Ordinance of Christ, in which only a Believer can bring his Infant-Seed

<sup>a</sup> *Mat.* 28.  
19.

<sup>b</sup> *Rev.* 1.6  
*Act* 2. 38.

<sup>c</sup> *Titus* 3.5

<sup>d</sup> *Gal.* 3.

27, 28.

<sup>e</sup> *ib.* 3.9, 26

<sup>f</sup> *Act.* 2.39

<sup>g</sup> *Gal.* 3.

7, 8, 14.

<sup>h</sup> *Rom.* 15.

8, 9.

*ch.* 4. 11, 12

Seed

Seed to Christ, and he cannot bring it to Christ out of an Ordinance; therefore it being his Duty to bring it to Christ, it must be in this Ordinance, to be blessed with *Abraham's* Blessing spiritually, as he and his Seed are Ecclesiastically; the reason that Christ gives for his Command of bringing Infants to him<sup>i</sup> is, That they are Church Members, *of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*; and it's known that Christ means his visible Church in the days of the Gospel by the Kingdom of Heaven; and *he took them in his Arms*, received them visibly; *laid his Hands upon them*, which is more than for any Ministers to Baptize them; and *blessed them*, And doth Christ bless with any Blessing besides the Blessing of *Abraham* that comes on the *Gentiles*?

§. 5. The *Lord's Supper* is a special Ordinance of Church Communion<sup>a</sup>, instituted and continued by Jesus Christ<sup>b</sup>, wherein by the Giving and Receiving the outward Elements of Bread and Wine<sup>c</sup>, the Death, Satisfaction and Merits of Christ are in a lively manner shewed forth; and he who through Christ is a worthy Receiver, doth spiritually and really by Faith, partake of his Body and Bloud, with all the high Benefits thereof, and not Ministeri-

i Matt. 19.

14, 15.

Mark 10.

14, 16.

Luk. 18. 16

a 1 Cor.

10. 16.

b 1 Cor. 11

26.

c Mat. 26.

26.

Mar. 14.

23.

Luke 22. 19

1 Cor. 11.

23.

d 1 Cor. II 20. is terially only, as he doth who is only an outside professed Member. It is called the *Lord's Supper*<sup>d</sup>, because it is of the Lord's Institution, and for this end, to shew forth his Death<sup>e</sup>, and because he first Celebrated it the Evening before his Death<sup>f</sup>.

§. 6. This being *instituted* for so spiritual and solemn Ends and Purposes<sup>a</sup>, cannot be administred or attended upon for any other Purposes, such as to qualifie Men upon a secular account, without great Prophanation thereof<sup>b</sup>.

§. 7. In the Administration of this Ordinance, these things according to the Primitive Institution, seem necessary to be observed.

1. That it be administred to the whole Church met together<sup>a</sup> in one place, and not to particular Persons, or to the Church in distinct parts, it being an Ordinance of Communion of a Body of Christ<sup>b</sup>.

2. That it be not dispensed to Members that are not capable to discern the Lord's Body, or to Examine themselves<sup>c</sup>.

3. That each Element be distinctly blessed, and apart by it self, by calling upon God in Christ for a Blessing<sup>d</sup>.

4. That after Consecration, the Bread broken is to be delivered with the Words of Distribution, directed

d 1 Cor. II 20.

e 1 Cor. II 26.

f ib. v. 23.

a 1 Cor. II 24, 25, 26, 27.  
Luk. 22. 19

b Mal. I. 11, 12.  
John 6. 26, 27.  
Ex. 20. 4, 7  
Rev. 13. 16, 17.

a 1 Cor. II 20.

b ib. 10. 16

c 1 Cor. II 28, 29.

d 1 Cor. II 24, 25.



ed to the whole Church<sup>e</sup> at once, and by them divided among themselves, and not carried up and down from Party to Party, or from Seat to seat. After the pouring out the Wine and blessing it, it ought to be dispensed with the words of distribution in like manner to the whole Church<sup>f</sup>, and not carried up and down as aforesaid, which practises came from the Church of Rome, and not from Christ or his Apostles.

e Mat. 26.  
26, 27.

f Ibid.

5. The Posture of Receiving is sitting<sup>g</sup>, as Christ and his Disciples, not kneeling or standing, because its a Feast, and signifies our eating and drinking Spiritually with joy and gladness, and though Prayer accompany it, wherein may be Praying Gestures, as in other Ordinances, yet Giving and Receiving here is a distinct Ordinance from Prayer.

g Mat. 26.  
20.

6. The Pastor of the congregation, <sup>h</sup> is to administer and not the Pastor of another, who hath no administering Power out of his own Congregation; neither hath Christ ordained any Administrators General to his Churches. For the Pastor also to take in a Partner in Administration is Will-Worship and Humane.

h Mat. 26.  
26.

7. When the Elements are blessed by the Church, the People ought

F

not

not to betake themselves to their secret Prayers, as if the Table had not bin blessed already ; none doth so at their ordinary Festivals.

§. 8. Christ hath not in either of these Seals precisely determined the quantity of either Element to be made use of, neither what quantity of Bread and Wine each should take ; or how much Water should be used in Baptism ; for our eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper, is not to satisfie our natural Hunger and Thirst<sup>a</sup> ; nor is the Washing with Water in Baptism, to put away the outward filth of the flesh<sup>b</sup>. But our Saviour having told us what is spiritually intended and signified, it is sufficiently manifest, that so much of each Element in both Seals, as doth hold forth to us the thing signified, is enough, tho never so little ; for Christ hath not brought his Churches in the New Testament under a *Mosaick* Tutorship, so as to bind them up to such quantities and qualities of externals, in manner as he did the Church of Old.

§. 9. The Administration of the Seals belongs not to any but Teaching Elders, being most appropriate to the Pastoral Office to feed the Flock in this peculiar manner ; for Christ when a Pastor on Earth

a 1 Cor. II

21, 22.

b 1 Pet. 3.

21.

Earth administred it, and therefore other Pastors whom he substitutes when ascended, ought to do it. Hence no private Member may be occasionally called thereto by the Church; if so, it renders Christ's Office needless and precarious. Nor no Pastor of another Church may; for the Pastor to one Church is no Pastor to another; nay he hath no power to Vote, and therefore not so much as a private Brother to Administer.

## CHAP. XII.

*Of Admitting Church Members.*

*The Ends of the use of the Keys : What they are : How distinguished : The Key of Knowledge : Of Government : How given to Peter : Elders for the due Management ; but primarily given to the Church : Women not to exert Ruling Power : The Church with Elders useth the Keys Ministerially : Admittances ought to be with Exactness ; with the giving a reason of their Hope, and an account of their Knowledge : Their Conversation to be enquired into : The Manner of Receiving in : The Person received gives up his Children : He may not Desert : He ought to bring his Children : Of Occasional Communion, and of receiving recommended or dismiss Members.*

§. 1. **H**AVING spoken to the Seals of the New Covenant, we come to speak to the other Ordinances of *Special Communion*, which concern the use of the Keys in all matters of Church Government<sup>a</sup>, they being Christ's, and committed by him to every Visible Congregation, to be used according to his Rules and Directions in his Name<sup>b</sup>, and

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor.

12, 28.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 5.

4.

and to his Glory, The great ends of which Dispensation of his Headship in this kind, are the due increase of his Churches<sup>c</sup>, and their Peace<sup>d</sup> and Purity<sup>e</sup>.

c *Isa.* 9. 7.  
*Acts* 2. ult.  
*Psa.* 122.  
 7.  
*Heb.* 7. 2.

*Zach.* 6. 13. *Joh.* 20. 21, 26. *1 Pet.* 1. 2.  
*e Rev.* 2. 1, 18. *Ezek.* 43. 10, 11. *Isa.* 5. 2.

*5* 5. 14.

§. 2. The Keys are the Power of Christ<sup>a</sup> which he hath given to every particular Congregation to open and shut it self by<sup>b</sup>, and to do all things that belong thereunto in order unto the said ends, it being Christ's House<sup>c</sup>, holy Temple<sup>d</sup>, Garden<sup>e</sup>, Vineyard<sup>f</sup>, Walled in, Hedged and Enclosed.

a *Isa.* 22. 22  
*Rev.* 3. 7.  
 b *Mat.* 16.  
 19.  
 c *Heb.* 3. 6.  
 d *Eph.* 2. 21  
 e *Cant.* 4.  
 12.  
 f *Isa.* 5. 1.

§. 3. The Keys of Christ are to be distinguished; they are his *Keys of Hell and Death*; or his *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, i. e. of the Church: His Keys of Hell and Death are the Power by Conquest which he hath obtained over Sin, Curse, Natural Death, and Satan himself<sup>a</sup>. The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven<sup>b</sup> are they that he manageth his Visible Churches by, and gives a power of opening and shutting a Visible Church by. These Keys are that of Knowledge<sup>c</sup>, and that of Discipline<sup>d</sup>.

a *Rev.* 1.  
 18.  
*1 Cor.* 15.  
 54, 55.  
*Mat.* 28.  
 20.  
*Heb.* 2. 14.  
 b *Mat.* 16.  
 19.  
 c *Luke* 11.  
 52.  
 d *Rev.* 3. 7.

§. 4. The Key of *Knowledge*, is the Gospel Preached<sup>a</sup>, the Spirit of Christ working inwardly, to open the heart to receive it<sup>b</sup>; in this re-

a *Lu.* 11.  
 52.  
*Mat.* 10. 7.  
*2 Cor.* 2. 12  
*1 Cor.* 16. 9  
 b *Acts* 16.  
 14.

c *Act.* 2. 41d *Act.* 10.

34.

e *11.* 8.*Eph.* 3, 4, 5.

6.

a *Isa.* 9. 6.b *Matt.* 28

19.

c *Act.* 1. 15d *Act.* 2.

41.

e *ch.* 5. 1.e *Mat.* 18.

17.

spect this seems to be one of the Keys which our Lord gave to *Peter*, in that he had the Honour of turning the first Key of Conversion after our Lord's Ascension, both to *Jews* <sup>e</sup> and *Gentiles* <sup>d</sup>.

§. 5. The other Key given unto *Peter* is of *Government* and *Discipline* <sup>a</sup>, neither of which Keys were given unto him as to a single Person, or ruling Head of the Visible Churches, neither that of Knowledge nor Government; but unto the Church in him, tho unto him with the other Apostles, as the first Managers thereof, their Names being put down in Christ's Charter granted to the Churches <sup>b</sup>, (as is usual in the Charters granted by Earthly Kings) yea a priority of time seems to be given to *Peter* (as appears by the event) on both accounts, as to the first Management; being the first Apostle that presided in Government <sup>c</sup>, in taking in and excluding Church-Members <sup>d</sup>, as we see he was the first that opened (by his Doctrine) the Door unto *Jews* and *Gentiles*, but in all this it appears, that he was but a Steward to Christ and his Church; and that although the present management of them was in *Peter* and the Apostles, yet it was the Church that was the subject of them <sup>e</sup>.



§. 6. Tho Christ hath wisely provided for his Honour, and the well-being of his Churches, in that he hath set Elders in his Churches to manage the Keys in an orderly and honourary manner <sup>a</sup>; yet he hath committed the propriety of 'em (next to himself, and in his own Name) unto the Church, whether Organized or Essential only, as to a spiritual Body corporate, which he hath endowed with this Priviledge among others, of having and keeping the Keys <sup>b</sup>; and it appears that the Church, as such, is the first subject of the Keys under Christ, because 1. The End of them is to preserve the being of a Church, as well as for its well-being, and therefore they must belong to it as soon as the Church becomes essential <sup>c</sup>.

2. As soon as the Church becomes a Body Corporate in Christ, the whole Charter for Priviledges belongs to it, and therefore all that appertain to its preservation, which cannot be without the power of the Keys <sup>d</sup>.

3. Without the use of the Keys they cannot Organize themselves with Elders and Deacons; for to let in any Person into Office must be by the use of them <sup>e</sup>.

4. A Church before it hath Ministerial Officers, may admit Mem-

F 4

bers,

a 1 Cor. 12. 28.

b Rom. 3. 2  
Acts 7. 37, 38.  
Rev. 3. 7.c 1 Cor. 5. 7.  
E 12. 28.

d 1 Cor. 7. 17. E 12. 26, 27.

e Acts 14. 23.

f *Gal.* 5.1.  
2 *Cor.* 6.  
14, 15.

bers, or reject a Scandalous Member for its preservation, therefore hath the use of the Keys; for embodying into a Church doth not so shut them up that none can either come in to them, or be cast out, before they have chosen a Pastor <sup>f</sup>.

g *Acts* 6.3.  
*Rom.* 12.4.

5. A Church that hath Elders may be by Providence deprived of them; how can they be re-supplied without the use of the Keys; especially if they call such as are not of their Body? None can be an Officer in a Corporation, but he that is incorporated first as a Member <sup>g</sup>.

h *Mat.* 18.  
15.

6. In proceeding with an offending Member, the first degrees thereof are by Members not in Ministerial Office <sup>h</sup>.

i 1 *Pet.* 5.3  
2 *Cor.* 1.24  
1 *Cor.* 4.1

7. Elders are but Stewards to Christ and his Church, for the due management of the Keys they are entrusted with, and are accountable to Christ and his Church, and are to use them with its consent in all Cases, not to make advantage by them to Lord it over God's Heritage, by assuming an Arbitrary and Despotick Power to themselves, exercising Dominion over the Church-Members Faith, instead of being helpers of their Joy <sup>i</sup>.

8. Suppose an Elder (there being but one, Pastor or other) come to fall under just cause of Censure, Who must

must use the Keys in deposing and censuring this offending and incorrigible Elder, but the Body of the Church<sup>k</sup>?

*k Col. 4. 17  
3. John 9.*

§. 7. By what hath bin said, it clearly appears, the Keys of Government primarily are placed in a Church as a Body Corporate; because the disposal of the orderly Management of them to Officers, belongs to the Church under Christ, and the use of them for their preservation, belongs to them before such Ministerial Officers are Ordained by them; in that mean time, the power of the Keys is exerted by the Church, by the hands of the Brethren; for tho each Sister is a true Member of this Corporation, and accordingly, upon that ground should Vote, yet Christ having made a particular Exception upon that account, that Women may not speak or exercise Authority in the Church<sup>a</sup>, therefore whatever passeth in the Church by the Majority of the Brethren is a Church act, so that it be done in a Congregation, the Sisters present, otherwise its no Church-Meeting<sup>b</sup>.

*a 1 Tim. 2.  
12.*

*1 Cor. 14.  
35.*

*b 1 Cor. 14.  
23.*

§. 8. A Church Organized with Elders, useth the Keys Ministerially, exerting the power of Christ committed to it in and by the Elders, going along with them in an explicate consent to all things agreeable

a 1 Pet. 5. 3 to the Order of the Gospel <sup>a</sup>, which power is exercised in the admitting Persons into Church-Fellowship, or in debarring of Members from the Communion of the Church <sup>b</sup>, and in all matters that tend to the one or other.

b 3 Joh. 10  
a Rom. 16. 1  
b 1 Cor. 5. 12.  
§. 9. They that are said to be coming into the Church, are either such as are not actual Members to this Church, but Members of other Churches <sup>a</sup>. Or else they are Non-Members to any Church <sup>b</sup>. And there are some Rules of Order to be observed *before* admitting, and some *in* Admittance of such of each sort.

§. 10. The Word of God requiring all exactness in Admitting Church-Members, least the *Childrens Bread be cast to Dogs* <sup>a</sup>, and that the House of God be not made *a Den of Thieves* <sup>b</sup>, and in order to the future Peace and Purity of the Church: The Elders, as Stewards who ought to be found faithful <sup>c</sup>, when any one propounds him or her self to join in Fellowship, ought to make impartial Enquiry into three things: 1. To ask the Reason of his Hope <sup>d</sup>. 2. What competency of knowledge in the Principal Doctrines of Faith and Order <sup>e</sup> he hath arrived at, so far at least, as to be fundamentally grounded therein, to be able to discern the Lord's Body <sup>f</sup>.

3. En-

3. Enquiry ought to be made whether his Conversation answer this Profession, and adorn the Gospel<sup>s</sup>.

§. 11. A Person's giving a reason of his Faith and Hope, is his Declaring what he hath Experienced of the Grace of God upon his heart<sup>a</sup>, through the Means of Grace that he hath fate under<sup>b</sup>, and the Operation of the Spirit<sup>c</sup>; in the production of his Repentance unto Life, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>d</sup>. which a true Believer is ready to give an account of<sup>e</sup> to any one that enquires of him seriously, especially to a Church of Christ, which he applieth himself unto, that is so highly concerned therein; for they that are added to a Visible Church, ought to be such as are judged by their Profession to be *such as shall be saved*<sup>f</sup>. the judgment of *infallibility* being peculiar to God<sup>g</sup>.

§. 12. Without a Competency of Knowledge (for all have not the same degree) the heart cannot be good<sup>a</sup>: therefore without some knowledge of God in his glorious Attributes; of the Doctrine of the Trinity; the Person and Natures of Christ; the Nature of the Law; of the Fall by Sin, and the Curse; Man's State by Nature in the Guilt and Pollution of Sin, Original and Actual; and his miserable undone Estate

g Tit. 2. 11  
12, 13, 14.

a 1 Pet. 3.  
15.

Psal. 66. 16

b 2 Cor. 2.

15, 16.

Acts 2. 41.

c 26. 17,

18.

d John 16.

8, 9.

e Heb. 6. 1.

f 1 Pet. 3.

15.

f Act 2. ult

Rom. 12. 1.

2, 3, 4.

1 Pet. 2. 5

g Joh. 5.

64.

Deu. 29.

29.

a Pra. 12. 2

a 1 Cor. II.  
29.

b & 15.34

c Isa. 42.3.  
Mat. 12.20  
d Eph. 4.2.

e 1 Pet. 2.2

f Rom. 14.1

Estate thereby, a Child of Wrath; The Nature of the Redemption wrought by Christ, in Satisfaction to God's Justice; Reconciliation of Sinners to God, and Purchase of Eternal Life for them; that our Sins were Imputed to Christ; and his Righteousness alone to us unto *Justification*, received by Faith alone, &c. Likewise, to know how these Mysteries of Life and Salvation are held forth to a Believer in the Seals of the Covenant <sup>a</sup>. And the knowledge of these things is the more particularly to be enquired after by the Elders of Churches, because many Professors build their Conversion upon meer common Convictions, and only some general Notions of God and Christ, when indeed they are very strangers unto, and ignorant of the Great Mysteries of the Gospel <sup>b</sup>. Yet such as these ought not to be discouraged, nor the *smoking flax quenched* <sup>c</sup>, but to be led on with gentle Instructions to a further knowledge of Divine Truth <sup>d</sup>, which if there be any beginnings of True Grace in the heart, they will with a great and sincere spiritual Appetite receive, *as new-born Babes* <sup>e</sup>; and the Church ought to be careful not to reject any that they judge have the least degree of saving Grace wrought in them <sup>f</sup>.



§. 13. Such a Conversation is to be looked after as *becomes the Gospel*<sup>a</sup>, which shews the Professors Faith *by his works*<sup>b</sup>, and blameless demeanour in the World, as the *Grace of God that bringeth Salvation* teacheth<sup>c</sup>. The afore-mentioned Course is not often taken, and therefore there are so many corrupt Members in Churches. Tho the exactest may be deceived<sup>a</sup>, yet the carelesness<sup>b</sup> and carnal Minds of Churches, and their Elders ambition to encrease their Churches into great Numbers, for the external Pomp thereof, and for Wordly Advantage, are the great prevailing causes of the Corruption and Apostacy of Churches<sup>c</sup>.

§. 14. The Pastor or Elders thus receiving satisfaction, that the Person offering himself, is a fit Stone for Christ's Building<sup>a</sup>, he is in a Church-Meeting to be Propounded to the Church<sup>b</sup>, and a competent time allotted to the Church for converse with the said Person<sup>c</sup>, and enquiry after his Christian Deportment, that all the Members of the Congregation may be satisfied in a Person whom they admit to so holy a Communion with them; which time being expired, and nothing objected against the said Person, the Elders bring him before the Church to

a *Phil.* 1.

27.

b *James* 2.  
18.

c *Titus* 2.  
11, 12.

a *2Tim.* 3.5.

b *Eze.* 34.  
7, 8, 10.

c *1 Tim.*  
6, 5.

*1 Pet.* 5.2.

a *1Pet.* 2.5

b *1 Cor.* 14  
23.

c *Acts* 9.  
26, 27.

d Rom. 14.  
16, 19, 20.  
e 15. 1, 2.

e Phil. 2. 2.

f 2 Cor. 9.  
14.

Act 11. 23.

g Col. 2. 5.

h Ro. 12. 1.

2 Cor. 8. 5.

i Rom. 15.

7, 8, 9.

to give the Reasons of his Hope, either by Word of Mouth or by Writing (if bashfulness hinder him or her from speaking<sup>d</sup>) which the Elder or Pastor reads; and if any Brother desire any further Question should be asked, it ought not to be denied. The Person owning the Declaration read, and no Objection made, the Elder puts the Question, *Whether the Church are satisfied in the Party propounded, and do consent to his Admission<sup>e</sup>?* desiring them to answer in the Affirmative by their Suffrage in lifting up their Hands; and then if any be otherwise minded, to speak or shew their *disagreement* by the same Sign: Which agreed, the Pastor or Elder doth ask the Party thus approved, *Whether he doth in the strength of Christ, yield professed subjection to the Gospel<sup>f</sup>, and promise to walk with that Church in the Communion of the Faith, and Order thereof<sup>g</sup>, giving up himself and his Seed to the Lord and the Congregation<sup>h</sup>, according to the Tenor of Abraham's Covenant<sup>i</sup>, or words of a federal obligation to Christ and the Church, to the same purpose?* Which he promiseth solemnly to do by the Help of God: Whereupon the Elder doth in the Name of Christ, receive him into Church-Fellowship, promising on the behalf of the Church and himself, *To watch over him in the*

the Lord<sup>k</sup>, and discharge towards him those incumbent Duties which may promote his edification in the ways of God<sup>l</sup>. Or Words to that purpose.

§. 15. A Person thus joined to a Congregation, is joined to and become a Member of a spiritual Corporation<sup>a</sup>, to the whole Body, not to the Pastor or Elder only (as some ignorant People think, and therefore run away when the Pastor or Elder disgusts them, or dieth) but are by Covenant united to the Church, and are not Discharged while *that* lasts, without the Church's leave, tho all the Officers die. Moreover, he is now obliged by his Covenant Relation, to attend ordinarily upon the Ministry and Ordinances administred in that Church<sup>b</sup>, and seek the Prosperity thereof; for if a joined Member to one Church ordinarily attend the Ministry of another, upon pretence of better Edification, or upon any other pretence. He 1. Hereby condemns his own Choice<sup>c</sup>. 2. He cannot expect better Edification where God hath not placed him<sup>d</sup>. 3. If he cannot Edifie at Home, he should ask his Dismission, and not feed abroad every day. 4. There is ordinarily some Corruption lies under that Plea. 5. It is a living in continual breach of a solemn Covenant. 6. It is

k Heb. 13.

17.

l 2 Cor. 1.

24,

Eccl. 10.8

8.

a 1 Cor. 12

27.

Isa. 56. 3.

Acts 5.36.

Rom. 12.5.

b Act 2.42

Heb. 10.25

c Gal. 2.18

d 1 Cor. 7.

24.

Psal. 92.13

c Ps. 133. 1

f Heb. 10.  
25, 26.

a Jos. 24.

15.

b Rom. 4.

11.

Mark 10.

13.

c Eph. 6. 4.

Jos. 4. 6.

22.

d Ps. 147.

13 &amp; 115.

13, 14.

e 128. 1,

3, 5, 6.

is quite contrary to the Primitive Practices. 7. It destroys the end of Churches, which is, that *Erethren should walk together in Unity*, Unanimity and Fellowship<sup>e</sup>. 8. It discourageth and breaketh the hearts of faithful Pastors and Elders. 9. It is a Practice that Christ will not bless, because it so directly strikes at his Glory in his Churches. 10. The Apostle makes such Deserters to be in the High-way to Apostacy<sup>f</sup>. 11. God is most glorified in every ones keeping his own Vineyard, and not others.

§. 16. As a Church-Member hath covenanted to walk in Communion of all Ordinances with that Congregation to which he is joined, and hath given up his Children with himself to the Lord; so he is obliged to perform his Promise<sup>a</sup>, in bringing his Infant-Seed to Christ, in the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith<sup>b</sup>, and in after educating and bringing them up *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*<sup>c</sup>; as to Domestic Instruction. And lastly, to bring them to the Means of Grace in the Church where he had given up himself and them to the Lord at his Admission<sup>d</sup>.

§. 17. As they that be non-Members are admitted Members of a Visible Church; so they that are Mem-

Members of one Congregation are sometimes received to the Communion of another, either occasionally and transiently, by vertue of Communion of Churches, for a time, by Recommendation ; or they are received into full Communion, and become actual Members, which is by Dismission<sup>a</sup>. But the Pastor may not admit a Member of another Church to occasional Communion at the *Lord's Supper*, without acquainting the Church therewith, and having their consent.

a Ro. 16.1.  
2 Cor. 3.1.

§. 18. A Church is not bound to admit all to their Communion that claim, by vertue of Membership to another Church ; for if any one of the Congregation excepts against such an one that offers himself, they ought first to hear the Grounds of Exception against the Party himself, or against the Church from whence he came, notwithstanding any Commendation that he brings<sup>a</sup>: And if any one brings a Dismission without a Commendation, the thing it self carries in it grounds of suspicion, that he is an offending Brother, and therefore not suddenly to be admitted, till further Enquiry be made.

a 1 Cor. 10  
31.  
2 Cor. 6.3

§. 19. If the Church-Member offering himself, was of a late Church now scattered and dissolved, such  
an

an one well known, may be admitted to occasional Communion, but cannot be dismissed to them; therefore if he desire to be admitted into full Communion, he must be admitted as a Non-Member.

a 2 Cor. 1.  
24.

§. 20. Sometimes it is so, that a Church denies to give a Dismission when asked; if so, the Church to which he desires to be dismissed (his complaint being made to it) ought to send Messengers to that Church, desiring satisfactory reasons for the said Refusal; and if it plainly appear that it be from a perverse Spirit, and no just Reason given, but that the said Brother be detained to his manifest wrong and injury, and Christ having not made Churches Prisons, such an one may be received as a Non-Member<sup>a</sup>.

a 1 Pet. 3.  
15.

§. 21. A Church-Member dismiss with Commendation, against whom there's no particular exception, nor against the Church from whence he is sent, hath his Dismission read before the Church, and is received by Suffrage, according to the tenor of the Covenant he made with the other Church from whence he came; and if any desire that he should declare the Reason of his Hope, he should be ready to do it<sup>a</sup>.



## CHAP. XIII.

*Of Church-Members Departure from  
Communion.*

*A distinct Use of the Keys belongs to every Church: A Member may not depart at his own pleasure: A Members Translation from Church to Church, by Recommendation and Dismissal: A Church may deny Dismissal in some Cases: What is to be done when unreasonably denied: The Keys in tendency to Exclusion: Excommunication direct or indirect: Direct what: Reasons for Direct ought to be great: When matter of Fact is notorious and scandalous how: When Offences are private, how: Admonition what: What degrees of it: Of Absolution: Excommunication indirect: Of Suspension.*

§. 1. **A** S the Keys are used in admitting Persons to Communion, so in their departure from the Communion of a particular Church. And it is either in matters relating to the translating a Member from one Church to another, or in such matters as tend to his Exclusion from all Church-Communion. This and the former use of the Keys necessarily depend on the Nature of a par-

a *Acts* 15.  
22. 1 *Cor.*  
14, 23.  
*Ro.* 16.23.

particular Congregation: For if there be but one Catholick Visible Church, and all other Congregations but so many parts; it cannot ly in the power of any part to make one a Member or no Member of the whole; the whole of any Corporation being not at the disposition of any minor part: But here every particular Church being a whole House<sup>a</sup>, a distinct Body Politick; there can be no regular Admission of Members, or departure of any from Communion, no not from one Church to another, without a Church act both of the one and the other, in the use of the Keys.

a *Gal.* 5.13  
1 *Pet.* 2.16

b *Rom.* 12.  
4, 5.

c 1 *Cor.* 15  
33. & 14.

d *Phi.* 2.3  
*John* 10  
10, 17.

§. 2. A Member therefore of a Visible Church may not at his own pleasure depart from the Communion of the Church to which he is joined, to non-Communion with any Church, nor to the Communion of another Church, without the leave of that Church whereof he is a Member<sup>a</sup>: For 1. A Church is a Corporation Priviledged with Rules of Admittance and Demittance, which are to be observed<sup>b</sup>. 2. Such Departure is rude and dishonourable to any stated Society<sup>c</sup>. 3. If Members have this liberty, Why not Ministerial Officers also<sup>d</sup>? 4. Such Departure is fatal and destructive to a Church; for the same liberty one may

may take, all may take <sup>e</sup>. 5. It's Covenant breaking ; for every Church Member Covenants to the contrary <sup>f</sup>. 6. It tends to destroy totally the Relation between the Elders and the People <sup>g</sup>. 7. It's a Member's Usurpation of, and stealing the Keys <sup>h</sup>. 8. It's Schism in the highest degree. 9. There is as much reason for coming in at pleasure, as going out at pleasure <sup>k</sup>, 10. It's a High Contempt of Christ and his Government <sup>l</sup>. 11. It's a grieving-offence to some, and a sinning-Offence unto others <sup>m</sup>. 12. *It breaks the staff of Beauty, and the staff of Bonds* <sup>n</sup>. 13. It tends to Anarchy : And *what Communion hath Christ with Belial* <sup>o</sup>? 14. It destroys what a Man hath formerly built <sup>p</sup>. 15. It exposeth the Churches and ways of Christ to the highest Scorn and Contempt <sup>q</sup>. 16. Such a Deforter is a *felo de se*, and doth Disfranchise and Excommunicate himself <sup>r</sup>.

e *ib.* 6. 67.

f *Isa.* 44. 5.

g *Mat.* 9. 36

h *Amos* 6.

13.

2 *Sa.* 19. 3

i 1 *Cor.* 11

18. 1 *Cor.*

12. 25.

k *Rev.* 3. 7.

*Mat.* 7. 12.

l *Jude* 19.

m *Rom.* 16

17.

n *Zach.* 11.

10, 14.

o *Mal.* 1. 6

1 *Thef.* 4. 8.

*Luk.* 10. 16

2 *Cor.* 6. 16

p *Ga.* 2. 18

q 2 *Pet.* 2. 2

r *Hof.* 13. 9

§. 3. The Translation of a Member of a Church is, when he goes from the Communion of one Church to the Communion of another occasionally, or in order to abide. He goes Occasionally only, when he obtains a Recommendation, being a Testimonial under the hand of the Pastor or other Elders, that he is a Member of such a Church, walks as be-

becomes the Gospel, and is not under any Censure or Dealing for any Offence. This falls short of a dismission; for 1. It needs not any Vote of the Church, it being a Testimonial. 2. It needs not be directed to any particular Church, but to all it may concern. 3. There's no transferring of Church Membership. 4. Such takes place only when a Church-Member is called for a Season only by Providence to communicate with another Church. 5. In Case there be no Elders in the Church, a Testimonial under the Hands of some of the Brethren may be sufficient <sup>a</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Acts 18.

27.

<sup>2</sup> Cor. 3.1

§. 4. A *Dismission*, or *Letter of Dismission* is that which is wrote from one Church to another, by the hand of the *Elders* (or in case ther's none, by some *Brethren*) by the consent, and in the Name of the Church; wherein the Member asking the said Dismission and obtaining it, is discharged from his original Relation to that Church, and is transferred to the constant Communion, Watch and Care of the other Church to which he is dismissed <sup>a</sup>. And in such a Dismission these things are to be observed from the Nature of the thing it self. 1. That the said Brother dismissed be not under the Censure or Dealing of the Church dismissing him. 2. That the

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 16.

1, 2.

the Letter of Dismission may be either with or without Commendation, as the Case may require, or the carriage of the said Member hath bin, tho he hath not bin under the Dealing of the Church for any censurable action : Many a *good Man* proving an *ill* Church-Member (as such an one may be an ill Husband) not carrying himself orderly and duely in his Relation. 3. That a Dismission be granted, either upon good Reason alledged by him, or upon his peremptory insisting upon it, for the Peace of the Church. 4. A Church-Member is not to be dismissed at large, to join to what Church he pleases ; for 1. This is to dismiss him to himself, and not to a Church, the Church to which he is dismissed being not specified. 2. To discharge him from the Watch and Care of one Church, and not to transfer him to the Communion of another, is the putting him out of all Church Communion, and therefore an interpretative Excommunication <sup>a</sup>. 3. A Church may not dismiss a Member to them that it hath no Church Communion with, and therefore not to the wide World <sup>b</sup>. 4. As a Church is to watch over a Brother while he *walks* with it, so their Watch and Care ought to be extended to him when he departs, to see him lodg'd

a 1 Cor. 5.  
13.

b Job. 15.  
19. & 17.  
21. 2 Cor.  
6. 14, 15.

c He. 13. 17

d Ro. 14. 13

e 1 Cor. 5.  
12, 13.f Heb. 8. 5,  
6. & 3. 3.a 2 Cor. 1.  
24.

b 1 Pet. 5. 3

c Ro. 14. 13

lodg'd in safe hands<sup>e</sup>. 5. To dismiss a Brother to his own pleasure, or to the wide World, is to expose him to Temptation; and accordingly many so dismissed have cast off all Church-Watch, and joined to none at all<sup>d</sup>. 6. No other Church can duely receive a Brother so dismissed, but as a Non-Member to any Church<sup>e</sup>. 7. It argues no small disregard to the Order of the Gospel, to grant such a Dismission, and likewise it becomes a great Reproach to the Church and Elders<sup>f</sup>.

§. 5. A Church may in some Cases deny a Dismission asked. As 1. When the said Brother is under Church Dealing. 2. When he desires only a Dismission at large to the World. 3. When he asks a Dismission to a False or Heretical Church: But if he ask a Dismission to a Church of the same Order, and give no satisfactory reason for it, and yet remains Peremptory in such Demand, the Church ought not to refuse the granting of it; for so to do, is 1. To keep a Man forcibly, and to make the Church a Prison<sup>a</sup>. 2. It is to *Lord it over God's Heritage*<sup>b</sup>. 3. It is to lay a stumbling-Block in his way, and to tempt him to rend himself off schismatically from the Church<sup>c</sup>. 4. It's to destroy his Edification, for he cannot  
edi-



edifie by Means he is forceably kept under <sup>d</sup>. 5. It's contrary to Christ's Golden Rule<sup>e</sup>. 6. It may prove dangerous to the whole Church, proving a *Root of bitterness* that may infect many <sup>f</sup>.

d Eph. 4.16

Rom. 15.2.

e Mat. 7.12

f Heb. 12.

15.

§. 6. Some Churches, or pretended at least, that walk by their own Wills rather than by any of Christ's Rules, will never grant a Dismission regularly to any. In such Cases a Regular Church is necessitated to take such Discharges of Members as an Irregular Church will give. And if upon the use of all due means they will grant none, the Church-Member so refused may join himself upon the terms of a non-Member, and so be admitted by the more Regular Church.

§. 7. The management of the Keys in such Cases as have a tendency to exclusion from all Church Communion, are such as look that way by reason of the falls and offences of Church-Members; and so comprehend all due means that are to be used for the Recovery of such as are fallen <sup>a</sup>, and that are to be taken in case of incorrigibleness.

a Gal. 6.1.

§. 8. Excommunication is by the use of the Keys in a Judicial Proceeding of the Church in the Name of Christ, whereby a Person is excluded and cast out of Communion

a *John* 9.  
22, 34.  
& *12.* 42.  
*1 Cor.* 5. 1.

in all the Special Ordinances thereof<sup>a</sup>.

a *Mat.* 18.  
17.  
*1 Cor.* 5. 4.

§. 9. Excommunication may be considered as *direct*, or more *indirect*. Direct is the sentence of the Church in the Name of Christ, for the casting out of an impenitent or notorious Sinner from Communion of the Church<sup>a</sup>; which is always to be understood of the *Special Ordinances*, for *Publicans* and *Sinners* are not excluded from the Ordinances of general Communion, such as *Preaching* and *Praying*; and Excommunication puts a Person but into the condition of *Publicans* and *Sinners* in respect of Ordinances.

a *Jude* 22,  
23.

§. 10. A Church ought not upon every slight occasion to proceed unto Excommunication of a Brother, but upon the account of Matters of great weight, wherein the Honour of Christ, the Purity of Ordinances, and the Soul of the Offender are concerned; and such offences do either call for immediate proceeding to this Sentence, or for a more gradual and mediate proceeding thereto<sup>a</sup>.

a *1 Tim.* 1.  
20. & 5.  
24.  
*1 Cor.* 5. 4.

§: 11. When the matter of fact is most notorious and scandalous, past all Dispute and publicly known<sup>a</sup>, then the Church is called immediately to proceed unto Censure (notwithstanding any present signs

signs of Conviction and Remorse) for the necessary Vindication of the Glory of God, the Church, and their Holy Profession, and to manifest their just indignation against such wickedness <sup>b</sup>. So as it were to snatch the Sinner as a *fire-brand out of the fire*, waiting for a well-grounded and tried evidence of his unfeigned Repentance under the Censure; the first and great End whereof is the Sinners Salvation, not his Destruction <sup>c</sup>.

b 2 Cor. 7.  
11.

c 2 Cor. 2. 6.  
7, 8.  
2 Cor. 10.  
8.  
1 Cor. 5. 5

§. 12. In case of Sins not so notorious, and more privately committed, the Churches proceeding must be more gradual, by all endeavours *in the spirit of meekness*, to restore such an one to Repentance <sup>a</sup>, which being obtained, there's no occasion for further proceeding as to Censure.

a Matt. 18  
15, 16, 17

§. 13. And here Admonition is of great use, which is an holy, tender and wise Endeavour to convince the offending Party of matter of fact, and of the sin of it, with the aggravating circumstances attending, as also to lead him to his Duty thereupon, charging it upon his Conscience in the sight of God, with due application of the Word of God which concerns his condition. And this belongs not to the Elders, in the first and second

a 1 *Thef.* 5

12.

*Rom.* 15. 142 *Thef.* 5.

14.

*Gal.* 6. 1.2 *Tim.* 9. 25*Heb.* 12. 15a *Matt.* 18

degrees of proceeding in this Case; but to all private Members in their places, as matters may concern them, and are known unto them more or less <sup>a</sup>.

§. 14. There are three degrees of Admonition<sup>a</sup>, first by a single Brother or Sister that is first acquainted with the Sin committed. The second is upon the non-Repentance of the offending Party; whereupon the first Admonisher takes to him one or two more, and admonisheth the offender the second time, which Admonition taking no effect, the Church is to be acquainted with the offence: And the Church by the Elders gives a third Admonition, which if the Sinner receives not, but continues impenitent, the Church proceeds to Censure<sup>b</sup>, unless the Church see reason to wait longer. And it follows from hence.

b *Ibid.* v.

15, 16, 17.

c *Heb.* 12.

15.

1. That every Church Member tho of private capacity only, has somewhat to do in his place, as well as the Elders<sup>c</sup>.

2. That in case of private offences, it is preposterous to publish them, or acquaint the Elders therewith, before the two lower degrees of Admonition are duely proceeded in, and not heard by the Offender.

3. That

3. That when Matters come to the Elders Ears, all private proceedings cease, and all things are to be laid before the Church.

4. When matters come before the Church, the Offendor rejecting the first and second Publick Admonition at most, is to be judged incorrigible <sup>d</sup>.

d *Titus* 3.  
10, 11.

§. 15. This great Censure is to be proceeded to in this manner; the Question is put by an Elder, *Whether the Church adjudge the person offending* (all due means having bin used according to the Rules of Christ) *to be guilty of matter of fact as charged, and remain incorrigible?* Which being answered in the Affirmative, the Judgment is fallen into the Pastor's or Elder's hand, as after the Verdict of a Jury, into the hands of the Judge; and accordingly he goes on to pass Sentence, as the Duty of his place requires. And first with much Solemnity, after he hath laid open the Sin, with several aggravations, he shews likewise the Awful Nature of this great Censure, and the main End thereof, for the Salvation, and not the Destruction of the Sinner, and accordingly calls upon God for his gracious Presence and Blessing upon this Sacred Ordinance, that the great end thereof may be obtained,

still expressing the deep sence the Church hath of the Fall of this Brother, with great Humiliation of the Church, with remorse for the Sin thus committed and persisted in.

Lastly, In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ before the Congregation (whether the offending Brother be present or withdrawn) the Elder cuts off and secludes such an one (by Name) from the Union and Communion of the Church, declaring the said Exclusion carries in it the sence of our Saviour, in saying *He shall be as an Heathen Man and a Publican*, and the full sence of the Apostle's Charge to the *Corinthians*, to deliver up such an one to Satan, &c. Which is no more than the putting him out of Communion of the Church the Kingdom of Heaven, into the World the Kingdom of Satan, for the humbling and breaking of him in the sight and sence of his sins, which is all that's meant by *the destruction of the flesh*.

§. 16 A Member thus judicially cast out, may through the Grace of God blessing this Ordinance, be brought to a great sight of his Sin and remorse for it, with great longing desires to return to the Communion of the Church again.

In

See Mat.

18.17, &c.

1 Cor. 5.

4, 5, 6.

2 Thes. 3. 14

1 Tim. 1.

10.



In this Case, Christ's Keys are to be used to open the Door, and receive the excluded Party into the Church again : For after a full proof of the truth of the Sinner's Repentance, he is brought by the Elders to make his Publick and Solemn Manifestation of his deep Remorse, &c. Which acknowledgment being received by the Church, with satisfaction and tender compassion towards him, he is by an Elder absolved from the aforesaid Censure, and re-admitted into full Communion, with the great joy of the Congregation, and Expressions of *thankfulness* unto God, Thus he that was bound is now loosed.

§. 17. Besides this *direct* way of proceeding against an offending Member, there is another much of the like nature, which we call *indirect*, because the Church puts not the Party out of its Communion before the Party hath secluded himself, and not by any regular way; but indirectly and contrary to all Rules of Order: For it is when a Church-Member, by reason of some offence taken at the Church, or some Member thereof not discharging his own Duty, withdraws himself, and separates from the Communion of the Church. A Person having thus Excommunicated him-

See Mat.  
16. 19.  
& 18. 18.

See Rom.

16. 17.

2 Thes. 3. 6

self, as it were, the Church ought to consider what is their Duty, and though a particular Member (or more) hath usurped to himself the power of the Keys, the Church ought not to acquiesce therein; but maintain that Power which Christ hath committed to it; and tho it cannot hinder the inordinateness of a Brother's unruly Passions, and ungovernable Temper, when God leaves him to it, but that he will run away from the Church, rend himself off, breaking all Order and Covenant Obligations, in opposition to all fraternal endeavours to stay him in the place that Christ hath set him in; the Church is bound to shew and assert the power of Christ which he hath entrusted it with, and judiciously shut the Door and turn the Key upon so sinful and disorderly a Departure from them, declaring that he having sinfully departed from the Communion of that Congregation, he is no longer under its Care and Watch, and is not to return to the Communion of the Church as before, till he hath given satisfaction to the Church.

§. 18. Some speak much of and practice a Censure of *Suspension*, when an offending Brother is forbid by the Church to come to its Communion in the Lord's Supper, till it

it appear whether he be guilty or no of the Sin charged on him.

Our Lord Jesus Christ hath given no such Rule to Churches to walk by: For till a Brother is fully Convict before the Church, the Church hath no power to deprive him of any Church-Priviledges that belong to him by reason of his Membership, and while the Church is in the way of its Duty, it is not guilty of the Sin of a particular Member. Hence Brethren sin greatly in withdrawing from a Church's Communion, because a Brother (or more) lyeth under the charge of some Sin which they have not yet convinced him of before the Church, either for the matter or Nature of the thing; till both which is done in the Judgment of the Church, he is not Convict, nor can be excluded from Ordinances; but being Convict and incorrigible, he is fully ripe for the Censure of Excommunication, and there is no room for Suspension; therefore Suspension before Conviction is unjust, and Suspension after is needless, and comes short of Christ's Institution. But if to gratifie some (through weakness startled at the presence of a suspected, un-convict Person at the Lord's Supper, who is under the Church's dealing in

order to Conviction) the suspected Brother will forbear Communion, it is to be lookt on as an act of his own, but no Censure of the Church.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIV.

*Of Communion of Churches.*

*That there is Communion between Churches: Some things incommunicable in Churches: Some communicable, and what: Wherein Communion of Churches consists: In Cases of Difficulties and Differences, what is to be done.*

§. 1. **V**isible Communion is of Members in particular in a Visible Church, a Body Politick or Corporate, which we have spoken unto. It remains that something be spoken of the Communion of those Bodies, *viz.* Churches, between whom there is a Visible Communion. And it is such a common participation of visible Priviledges of the Means of Grace in the instituted Ordinances of Christ, and a mutual Communication of benefits, as occasion may serve, as is between co-ordinate Bodies Politick, without infringement of their particular and appropriate Priviledges limited to, and bounded within themselves only.

§. 2. The Priviledges of a particular Church are to be considered in Communion of Churches, as incommuni-

municable, and as communicable. They that are incommunicable are such as one Church cannot hand over to, or communicate to another, without breaking the Charter, and overthrowing their own Constitution; and they are such as these,

1. A Church chooseth its own Elders and Deacons, but cannot choose either for another Church.

2. Such Ministerial Officers being chosen, the relation stands firm between them in the Church which chose them, and they are not Elders or Deacons to another Church; the Pastor and Deacon to the Church at *Coloss* are not Pastor and Deacon to the Church of *Ephesus*.

3. The doing of any *Act* which is inseparably distinguishing to that Office Relation in the execution thereof, cannot be communicated or carried from Church to Church. As for Example, the Administration of Seals, or use of the Keys are such acts; therefore a Minister to one Church cannot dispence them in another, because they are performed by vertue of his Office, that is limited to one Church; nor can he transfer his relation, or the proper Adjuncts thereof.

4. There is also a peculiar Corporation-Relation and Priviledge that a *Brother* hath in the Church of



of which he is a Member, and can have *neither* in any other, where he is not an *actual* Member : as Membership in stated Fellowship under the Watch and Government of the said Church ; this he hath no where else : Likewise, he can Vote and give his Suffrage in any Church acts, which he cannot do elsewhere. Wherefore one Church cannot have Communion with another in choosing or ordaining Elders or Deacons, any further than to look on and be Eye-Witnesses of what they do ; nor in admitting or casting out of Members.

5. There can be no Communion by way of mixing or conjoining powers (as there cannot be of transferring ; ) any more than the Corporation of *Bristol* and *Glocester* can mix and conjoin their Juridical Power.

§. 3. But there are some things wherein Communion of Churches according to the Nature of them doth consist ; as in Natural Bodies there are things and actions wherein they can communicate to each other, so far as is consistent with their Nature to commix or conjoin ; but there are some things wherein its impossible they should, as in Sensation, or in the use of the Senses, we may hear, see, taste, &c. *with* one another, but  
can-

cannot transfer our Hearing, Tasting, Smelling or Seeing to one another. So in Bodies Politick, there are some things we can enjoy or participate of together, and can communicate to each other; but there are others that we cannot. So it is in the Communion of Churches.

1. We may benefit by each others Gifts and Graces, the exercise whereof are separable from any particular Relation that any one hath to a Church. Such things belong to general Communion, as to Expound, Preach and Pray, &c. These the Pastor of one Congregation may exercise in another, without any consideration of his Pastoral Relation, only as one that is Gifted for such Services to common advantage.

a *Acts* 15.

2. There is Communion in counsel and advice; and such there was between the Church of *Jerusalem* and that at *Antioch* <sup>a</sup>.

b *Phil.* 4.  
15.

3. There is Communion between Churches in giving and in receiving<sup>b</sup>.

4. There is Communion in respect of Members, so as one may recommend or dismiss Members to another, but this cannot be in Officers; one Church cannot dismiss an Elder or Deacon, as such, to another. Whatever Office a Man bears in a Church ( it's so in all Civil Corporations ) he cannot be dismiss with his

his Office, but only as to his Membership. The Mayor of *Glocester* may be transferred to *Bristol*, and taken in a common Member, but cannot be transferred as Mayor to the Mayoralty of *Bristol*, no not for one Sessions, Day or Hour.

5. They may communicate with each other as to fraternal Entertainments in spiritual Feasts, so far as to give each other the right hand of Fellowship, as to the Members of true Churches of Christ; and hence the Members of one Church, as occasion is, do partake in Ordinances with another, so far as Office-Relation is not concern'd. So the Member of one Congregation partakes in the Lord's Supper with another; or brings his Child to be there baptized where the Pastor is administering in his proper Place and Relation. But the Pastor cannot come and administer either Seal in a Congregation to which he hath no Pastoral Relation, nor can be owned in any Pastoral act there. The Pastor himself may receive in a Neighbouring Church, as a Brother of another Congregation, but not as a Pastor; much less can he administer there as a Pastor. It's one thing to communicate as a private Member, and another thing to dispense as a Ministerial Officer. A Member of the Corporati-  
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on of one City, yea the Mayor himself, may be received with much welcome as an approved Member of a Neighbouring Corporation at Festival Entertainments, but must not sit on the Bench there to do any act of Office, out of his Place, and out of his Power, whether the Mayor or chief Magistrate be alive or dead. So whether the Pastor of a Church be alive or dead, the Pastor to another Church hath nothing to do there as a Pastor.

§. 4. In Cases of Difficulties and Differences arising in Churches, many Churches holding Communion together, may by their Elders and Messengers meet together to consult and advise about the said Matters, and report to the respective Churches. Howbeit these Assemblies, as such, are not trusted with any coercive Power or Jurisdiction over the Churches, to impose their determinations on them or their Officers. Besides these *occasional* Assemblies and Councils, there are not instituted by Christ any stated Synods in a fixed Combination of Churches or Officers in lesser or greater Assemblies; nor are there any Synods appointed by Christ by way of Subordination to one another.

## CHAP. XV.

*Of Maintenance of Ministers.*

*Christ appointed the Support of Ordinances and Ministry: That Ministers are to be maintained, proved from Christ's Mission of the Disciples; And by the Doctrine of the Apostle Paul.*

§. 1. **C**HRIST Jesus in his infinite Wisdom having instituted Churches, and external Ministers and Ordinances in those Churches, hath also appointed such outward ways and means for the support thereof, as is necessarily conducive to his Honour and Interest in his established Worship in the World; and therefore hath ordained Churches should minister of their Temporals to the upholding and maintaining of Spirituals, both Ordinances and Ministry.

§. 2. The Subject which we shall chiefly speak to now with much brevity is, *To prove that those Ministers who labour in the Word and Doctrine ought to be maintained in a competent manner by the Churches or People that partake of their labours, so far at least as they are able.* And it appears:

§. 3.

a Luke 10.

3, 4, 5.

b Mat. 10.

10.

Luke 9.

1, 3, 4.

c Mat. 10.

10.

d Ibid. v.

14, 15.

a 1 Tim. 5.

18.

§. 3. 1. In that Christ when he Ordained and sent forth his first Preachers of the Gospel, chargeth them not to go forth at their own Charges, both the Seventy <sup>a</sup>, and the Twelve <sup>b</sup>, to make no Provision for themselves, either Food, Raiment or Money, but into whatever House they went, there to stay, Eating Drinking and Lodging; and if they were not welcome and freely entertained, they were to *shake off the dust of their feet* against them in detestation of them; and he gives them likewise to understand, that he sent them not about as Common Beggars, but that there was Moral Justice in it that they should be maintained by the People to whom they Preached, *for the Workman is worthy of his Meat* <sup>c</sup>; nay, he tells them how dangerous it shall be to those that refuse them to save their Charges, *It shall be more tolerable for Sodom, &c.* <sup>d</sup>.

§. 4. 2. The Apostle Paul insists much upon it as a Duty, that he saw the Churches were backward enough to in his day, and would be more afterward. For

He Argues from the Law of Nature and common Justice, *Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox, &c.* <sup>a</sup>. It's an unnatural thing to starve the labouring Ox, and not suffer him to



to take now and then a Mouthful of the Corn he treadeth out: Again, he argues from common Justice: The Day Labourer by the Rules of Commutative Justice, is to have his Hire: Again, he argues from the less to the greater, *Doth God take care for the poor dumb Oxen<sup>b</sup>, and doth he not take care for his labouring Ministers?* And he tells us this was the Moral sence of *Moses* his Law, *not to muzzle the Ox, &c<sup>c</sup>*. Again, he argues from the reasonable expectation of all labourers in worldly Affairs; he instanceth in the Soldier, that goes not a Warfare at his own Charges; The Planter of a Vineyard expects Fruit thereof; The Shepherd that feeds the Flock expects to eat of the Milk; and the Plowman and Thresher<sup>d</sup>. If all these reasonably expect outward substance from their labours, Why should not he that *labours in the Word and Doctrine?* Again, the Apostle argues by way of comparison of Temporal and Spiritual things together, shewing that spiritual things are much more worth than carnal; And hence saith, *If we sow to you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things<sup>e</sup>?* Again, he removes an Objection that they would be apt to make from his own Example, and saith, *That although he*  
*took*

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 9.  
9.

<sup>c</sup> Deut. 25.  
4. 1 Cor.  
9, 10.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. 9.  
7, 10.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. 9.  
11.  
Rom. 15. 27

f 1 Cor. 9.  
4, 5.

took nothing of them for some special reasons, yet he assured them that he had power to do it as well as others<sup>f</sup>, implying that other Apostles did take Maintenance. He Argues also from the practice under the Law by God's Appointment, That they which did minister about Holy Things, liv'd on the Temple and Altar, and that God hath not taken less care of his Ministers about Holy Things in the days of the Gospel, but hath made *Maintenance of Ministers* an Ordinance; He hath Ordained, That they that Preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel<sup>g</sup>.

g Ibid. v.  
13, 14.

You will say, *Where did Christ Ordain it?* It is enough if we be told so by an Inspired Man, but it is easie to see that he Ordained so at his first Mission of Gospel-Preachers, the *Twelve* and the *Seventy*. Obj. *Paul took nothing of the Corinthians.* Ans. He tells us why, Upon the account of the *Corinthians* and *False Teachers*, That he would not be cut off from his Triumph upon this account, to *stop their Mouths*; but yet he saith he *robbed other Churches*, (*i. e.* he took more of them than otherwise he would have done, even what he should have had of the *Corinthians*) taking Wages of them to do the *Corinthians* service<sup>h</sup>.

h 2 Cor.  
11. 8.

§. 5. It may be Enquired, *In what Proportion the Maintenance of a Minister ought to be?* The Apostle calls it Wages, and therefore 'tis the sence of our Saviour and the Apostle too, That it should be a comfortable Provision for themselves and Families, according to that Way and Degree of Living which the generality of sober People have to whom they Preach, the Apostle telling us, *Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things* <sup>a</sup>.

a Gal.6.6.

Obj. But it may be said, *How much of all good things?* I will give little enough.

Ans. The Apostle in the context says enough to stop Mens Mouths here <sup>b</sup>, *Let every Man prove his own Work, &c.* immediately after the Text mentioned <sup>c</sup>. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked, &c.*

b Ibid.v.4.

c Ib.v.7.8.

Object. You will say, *It seems to be a low and Mean Thing for a Preacher of the Gospel to take Maintenance.*

Ans. Is any Ordinance of Christ low and Mean? Doth he Ordain Low and Mean Things? And why did Christ himself take Maintenance, rather than provide for himself Miraculously <sup>d</sup>? Much more might

d Luke 8.3

might be said ; but this will be enough to any one that hath any deference for the Authority of the Scriptures.

7 AP 53

*FINIS.*

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